

THE
SATIRES
OF
AULUS PERSIUS FLACCUS,
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE.

BY **REFERENCE**
WILLIAM GIFFORD, ESQ.

WITH
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,
AND
THE LATIN TEXT.



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TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ROBERT EARL GROSVENOR,
VISCOUNT BELGRAVE, BARON GROSVENOR,
&c. &c.
LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF FLINT,
THIS
TRANSLATION OF PERSIUS
IS INSCRIBED, **REFERENCE**
AS
A GRATEFUL AND AFFECTIONATE TESTIMONY
OF
RESPECT FOR THE
LONG AND UNINTERRUPTED KINDNESS WITH WHICH
HE HAS HONOURED THE TRANSLATOR,
AND OF
THE SINCEREST ADMIRATION
OF
HIS TALENTS AND VIRTUES.

Oct. 1st. 1817.

INTRODUCTION.

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ILL health having driven me for two or three successive seasons to the Isle of Wight, I amused myself, in that sequestered spot, with a pocket Persius ; and, when the progress of recovery admitted of severer application, with turning favourite passages of him, into English verse. In this, I had no farther end than beguiling the sense of pain, and wearing away a few hours innocently and happily. By degrees the work grew on my hands ; and I had nearly gone through the whole, before I was conscious to myself of the bulk of my labours.

At that time I entertained no thoughts of printing what was thus produced ; although the republication of Juvenal presented an opportunity of subjoining it to that work : I continued however to fill up and correct the translation, at leisure ; and now, when a third edition of Juvenal is about to appear, I have determined (with the approbation of my friends) to submit it to the publick.

It cannot, I think, be affirmed, that a new translation of Persius is much wanted : we are already possessed of several ; of various degrees of merit, indeed, but all exhibiting strong claims on the pub-

lick favour. Brewster is familiar to every scholar. I had not looked into him since I left Exeter College ; but the impression he then made on my mind was very powerful, and certainly of the most pleasing kind. I thought him, indeed, paraphrastick, unnecessarily minute in many unimportant passages, somewhat too familiar for his author, and occasionally ungraceful in his repetition of trivial words and phrases ; but the general spirit, accuracy, and freedom of his version commanded my highest admiration,—which a recent perusal has not contributed, in any perceptible degree, to diminish. Dryden, of whom I should have spoken first, is beyond my praise. The majestic flow of his verse, the energy and beauty of particular passages, and the admirable purity and simplicity which pervade much of his language, place him above the hope of rivalry, and are better calculated to generate despair than to excite emulation.

But Dryden is sometimes negligent and sometimes unfaithful : he wanders with licentious foot, careless alike of his author, and his reader ; and seems to make a wanton sacrifice of his own learning. It is impossible to read a page of his translation, without perceiving that he was intimately acquainted with the original ; and yet every page betrays a disregard of its sense. By nature Dryden was eminently gifted for a translator of Persius ; he had much of his austerity of manner, and his closeness of reasoning—yet, by some unaccountable obliquity, he has missed those characteristick qualities so habitual to

him, and made the poet flippant and inconsequential.

I scarcely know what to say of Holyday. His contemporaries praise him for the light which he has thrown upon an obscure writer; and in this there is some justice. What appears extraordinary is, that the man who seems, in his Juvenal, to have placed the chief merit of translation in doggedly measuring line for line with the original, should, in his version of Persius, indulge in a diffusion at which Dryden himself would, perhaps, have started. Every thought is dilated, and the text runs perpetually into a laboured commentary. By this, much of vigour is lost, while little or nothing is gained on the score of harmony. Yet he has some pleasing passages, and the readers of his time must have been gratified by his labours; for Persius was then first rendered not only accessible, but, generally speaking, intelligible to them.

Much need not be said of Owen's translation. It is sensible and faithful; and this must be the whole of its praise; for it has neither the neatness nor the poetry of his version of Juvenal, and seems, indeed, to be a very hasty performance.

I come now to Sir W. Drummond. This is a work of great elegance; spirited and poetical, and polished into a degree of smoothness seldom attained. But Sir William Drummond declares, that his object was "rather to express his author's meaning clearly than to translate his words or to copy his manner servilely. How he wishes these

expressions to be understood, he has explained in a subsequent passage, which I shall take the liberty of laying before the reader.

“What Dryden judged too rude for imitation, the criticks of the present day will probably think I have been prudent in not copying. I have *generally*, therefore, followed the outline; but I have *seldom* ventured to employ the colouring of Persius. When the coarse metaphor, or the extravagant hyperbole debases, or obscures the sense of the original, I have changed, or even omitted it; and where the idiom of the English language required it, I have thought myself justified in abandoning the literal sense of my author.” Pref. p. x.

I am somewhat inclined to suspect that Sir W. Drummond’s opinion of the “criticks of the present day,” is not altogether ill founded. In proportion, therefore, as he has gratified them, I shall be found to displease them; having freely encountered what he so sedulously avoided, and, with one or two exceptions merely, followed the original through all its *coarseness* and *extravagance*, and represented with equal fidelity, the outline, and the filling up, of the picture.*

But, it will naturally be asked, if a new transla-

* Two other translations of Persius have appeared; but as they were not published before the present version was finished, they do not come under my judgment. I may add, however, that the last of the two, by Mr. Howes, is a work of singular merit. The other, which I have not been fortunate enough to procure, is said to be a poor performance. 1817.

tion *be not much wanted*, why is the present intruded on the publick? I am not one of those who think that the successful execution of a work, should totally preclude every future attempt to rival or surpass it; for this would be to introduce an apathy and dejection fatal to all progressive excellence. The field of literature happily admits of various species of contention; and to excel in the humblest of them, is to possess some degree of merit, and to prefer some claim (however slight) to publick favour. He who cannot attain the richness and harmony of Dryden, may yet hope to surpass him in fidelity; and though the spirit and freedom of Brewster may not be easily outgone, his conciseness and poetical feeling have not much to intimidate a competitor of ordinary endowments.

But to come closer to the question,—I endeavoured (I know not with what success) to translate Persius as his immediate follower had been translated; I hoped that to a fidelity equal to that of the most scrupulous of my predecessors, I might be found to unite a certain degree of vigour, and to atone for a defect of poetical merit by conciseness and perspicuity. When I speak of fidelity, however, let it be observed, in justice to myself, that I carry the import of this word somewhat further than is usually done. I translate for the English reader, and do not think it sufficient to give him a loose idea of the original; but as fair and perfect a transcript of it as the difference of language will admit: at the same time it will, I trust, appear

that I have not, in any instance, fallen into barbarisms, or violated the idiom of my own country.

It has been objected that my lines run into one another, and that they would have pleased more had the sense ended with the couplet. I once thought the same: and in many a school-translation “rhymed and rattled on” very glibly, and very much to my own satisfaction: but I subsequently formed a different (it becomes me not ^{to} say, a more correct) opinion of the duty of a translator; and to that, notwithstanding the gentle admonitions which have been conveyed to me, I continue to adhere. It will be readily admitted, that I have not adopted the most easy mode of translation; since, not content with giving the author’s sense, I have entered as far as it was in my power, into his feelings, and exhibited as much of his manner, nay of his language, (i. e. his words,) as I possibly could. Expressions which have been usually avoided as not *germane* to our tongue, are here hazarded, for the simple purpose of bringing Persius, as he wrote, before the unlearned reader; who may be assured that he will find, in few versions, as much of the original as in the present:—for this, of course, he must take my affirmation;—nor is this all; for I have given him no more than the original: all that will be found here, is to be found in Persius. If there be aught of pride in any part of this, it is of a very humble kind; since I have undergone no trifling degree of labour for the sake of those who can never be sensible of my industry. Scholars

indeed, can appreciate it ; but to some of them it will be of little importance, and to others the mode here adopted will be less pleasing than a more splendid style of versification.

It is now time to come to the author himself.

So much has been said in the Essay prefixed to the translation of Juvenal, of the nature and end of Satire, and of the most striking qualities of the three great masters of this species of writing among the Romans, that it will scarcely perhaps be thought necessary to revert again to the subject. A few words however, may yet be added on the peculiar excellencies and defects of the present writer ; though it will be proper to apprise the reader, at the same time, that in a path so often travelled, he must not look for novelties, or expect to have his curiosity often gratified by interesting and unexpected views.

It is observed in the Essay just mentioned, that “ Persius somewhat mistook his talents when he applied to Satire :” my meaning perhaps would have been more distinctly expressed, had qualifications been substituted in the place of *talents* ; for it was less in these than in the former that our youthful poet was deficient.

Under Augustus, at least under the government which immediately preceded his usurpation of the functions of the empire, young men of family were usually placed with persons eminent in the forum and the senate, by whom they were initiated in the offices of the state, and taught to look abroad, and

to mingle in the business of real life ; but from the accession of Tiberius a portentous and fatal revolution in the mode of education took place. Merit became the object of dread ; and reputation either in eloquence or arms was regarded by the government with a fretful and uneasy feeling which commonly terminated in hatred and aversion. What therefore could only be followed with danger, naturally ceased to be an object of pursuit, and youth were no longer trained by publick men amidst publick concerns. In lieu of this, they were now exercised in the schools of the rhetoricians, and habituated to debate on topicks altogether remote from common life. Thus they became, like the theological dialecticians of the middle ages, nice and subtile disputants ; but as the questions which they agitated seldom led to any practicable results, they could only be complimented after a course of the severest study, with being learned to little purpose, and wise to no profitable end.

In these disadvantages, Persius merely shared with the rest of the Roman youth ; but the infelicity was probably increased, in his particular case, by the debility of his constitution. He seems, indeed, to have been wholly educated within the paternal walls, till he had reached his twelfth year, when the necessity of better masters than Volaterra (the supposed place of his birth) was capable of supplying, apparently induced his friends to remove with him to Rome.

About six years before this took place, he had

lost his father : so, at least, we are told in that desultory narrative of the poet's life, which goes under the name of Suetonius, but which seems to be patched up from scholia of different degrees of authority, long after his time. This part of the account, however, has been thought inconsistent with the poet's own declaration :

“ Sæpe oculos (memini) tangebam parvus olivo,
Grandia si nollem morituri verba Catonis
Dicere, non sano multum laudanda magistro,
Quæ pater adductis sudans audiret amicis.”

What, say the criticks, “⁴ could a child of six years old have occasioned his father a sweating because he could not repeat Cato's dying speech?” — But the real inconsistency rests with those who persist in bringing forward the author, on all occasions, in *propria persona*. It is one of years and gravity who opens the third Satire ; it is a preceptor who alternately seeks to shame, to alarm, and to encourage his pupil ; and who concludes his admonition in a strain of indignant reproof which a youth could not with decency assume towards his fellows.* But this rage for taking the poet literally is almost universal. Britannicus affirms that he was also poor. “ There are some dates (he says) given by the writers of his life ; but as they do not appear

* The *unus ait comitum*, which has apparently misled the criticks, is ill rendered in this place, *one of my companions says*. It would be more correctly represented by our low and familiar phrase, “ *here one of my gentlemen,*” (i. e. *one of the party,*) “ *exclaims :*” and this, in fact, is its meaning.

of sufficient authority, I have rejected them; but that he was in low circumstances, we know from his own confession—*tenuum opum se fuisse declarat illic*,

“ Quis expedivit psittaco sumum χαίρει?
Magister artis, ingenique largitor
Venter”!—

At Rome, Persius was placed under the care of the most eminent grammarians; and he must have studied with diligence and success, for every part of his works manifests an intimate acquaintance with all the niceties of the art. The house of his mother, who had now taken a second, or, as some say, a third husband, appears to have been a little academy, and frequented by many persons eminent for learning and virtue: they were however mostly of studious habits, and of the Soick cast; and their conversation had its due effect on the youthful bard.

With such men and such studies he continued engaged, till (at the age of seventeen) he took the *toga virilis*, or manly gown. He was now become master of himself, and it may be suspected, from the account which he gives of his wanderings, and which, from the previous strictness and seclusion of his life, was no unnatural or uncommon circumstance, that he somewhat abused the first moments of his liberty. This, however, was not of long duration. Like one suddenly brought from darkness into the glare of day, he appears, when

the world first broke upon him, to have been dazzled, confused, and finally intimidated. In this state of uneasiness he had recourse to Cornutus, a celebrated Stoick professor, and one of those who frequented the house of his mother. This excellent person took him under his especial care, and became the *guide, philosopher, and friend* of his future life. The poet felt his obligation; and antiquity affords few more pleasing pictures than that presented to us of the preceptor by the warm and affectionate gratitude of the youthful pupil.

It would therefore appear, that if Satire be taken in its largest and most legitimate sense, as a corrective of the besetting follies and crimes of society, Persius must necessarily have been deficient in many of the qualifications requisite to enter upon it with advantage. Educated in privacy, he was merely removed from one grammarian to another, till he finally fell into the hands of Cornutus, who brought him under the strictest discipline of the Stoick school. He seems,

————— for nature in his soul
Put something of the raven,—

to have found not a little congenial to his feelings in the austerity of the Porch; and to have imbibed the lessons of his preceptor with all the frankness of youth, and all the zeal of a determined proselyte.

Et premitur ratione animas, vincique laborat.

Of publick affairs he scarcely appears to have heard. He has no references to the political events

of his day ; and the only transaction of the government, which he condescends to notice, is that of a triumph which must have taken place when he was a mere child. He never adverts to the great culprits of the time ; nor appears to take any interest in the state of degradation to which his fellow citizens had sunk. He dreams of no freedom but that enjoyed by the followers of Zeno : it is moral not political slavery which provokes his rage ; and the tyrants with whom he delights to grapple are always those of the mind,

Thus we may, in some measure, account for the readiness with which he embraced all the dogmas of the sect. He evidently drew his ideas of mankind from the lessons of his preceptor, and looked upon human actions in the abstract ; not modified and controlled by conventional circumstances, but (in the lofty language of his school) independent of all extrinsic influence ; in a word, not as they are, but as his books informed him they ought to be. Hence his ardent mind takes fire at the slightest aberration from the line of duty which he somewhat too peremptorily traces : and it is occasionally amusing to mark the vehemence of this youthful censor, and the simplicity of his amazement, at not finding the oracles of his friend and instructor admitted as implicitly and as universally as those of Delphi or Dodona.

The education of Horace (for of Juvenal enough has been said elsewhere) was different.—His father, whom he remembers as gratefully, though not as

poetically as Persius does his preceptor, not only took care to give him the best masters, but inured him, from his earliest years, to look abroad, and gather rules for his conduct from the passing examples of virtue and vice offered to his notice. From short and broken studies, he plunged, at once, into active life ; and when, as he says, poverty compelled him to depend on his writings for subsistence, he was already qualified for the task by long and unremitted intercourse with society. Before he became known to Mæcenas, before he was introduced to Augustus, he stood on terms of friendship and familiarity with many of the most eminent scholars and statists of the age. Hence he grew wise in men ; and hence we behold him, instead of adopting, with fond credulity, the specious fallacies of Cleanthes or Chrysippus, encountering them with true Socratick spirit ; and appealing from dialectick subtilties to the lessons of experience, and the common apprehension of mankind.

What has been hitherto adduced, applies to the main object of satirick writing : but the range of this department of literature is wide and excursive ; and many topicks may be found in it, which, though of a secondary nature when relatively considered, are yet of no light moment in the economy of human affairs. For the discussion of many of these, our poet, notwithstanding the shade and solitude in which much of his life was passed, was excellently fitted both by nature and education ; and it will not be useless to examine with what success he treated

those objects which were open to his inquiries, and obnoxious to his anger or his mirth.

His first Satire possesses a very considerable degree of merit. It is lively, humorous, and severe ; but it is chiefly valuable as presenting us with a most curious and apparently faithful view of a state of literature and taste almost peculiar to the times in which the author wrote. Some parts of it, and these probably the most interesting, are necessarily obscure to us, not from any confusion in the poet's ideas, or ambiguity in the mode of expressing them ; but from our utter ignorance of the works at which his strictures are levelled. No one doubts that much of the humour of the *Frogs* is lost ; and yet that piece is come down to us with the scholia of several ancient writers, pointing out a variety of passages which Aristophanes parodied ; and recording many transactions both of a publick and private nature which provoked his satire : but Persius has been transmitted to us comparatively bare. We know not what authors he attacked, what poems he ridiculed, what passages he burlesqued. One of the longest of the latter is said by the commentators to be taken from a tragedy of Nero's : but, in the first place, there is no reason to believe that Nero ever wrote a tragedy ; and, secondly, if he had written one, it is quite clear (from the structure of the verse) that the lines in question could not be taken from it.

In his second Satire, Persius has borrowed many of the sentiments from Plato. The plan of this

little piece is well laid, but the execution is imperfect : many of the parts are highly wrought ; but the *callida junctura* will be looked for in vain. It may not be an unpleasant or unprofitable task for the reader to turn to the tenth Satire of Juvenal, which is derived from the same source, and to compare the poets. It seems probable that the compressed and jejune manner in which his predecessor had treated the subject did not escape Juvenal ; who has certainly made a nearer approach to their common model, and by illustrating each of his topicks with striking and beautiful examples, given to his poem an interest and a power, which that of Persius, notwithstanding its terse and polished severity, and its high tone of divinity, cannot hope to command.

In the third Satire our author is more original, and more successful. His topicks are chosen with skill, and his stoicism, though still sufficiently austere, is neither extravagant nor impracticable. He is here both interesting and instructive in a very commendable degree ; and it is almost to be regretted that he had not shut up his Cleanthes, and applied his future leisure to the study of mankind : the cause of poetry perhaps might have gained something by it, while that of philosophy would apparently have sustained no very sensible loss.

The fourth Satire is a meagre and imperfect sketch from a finished picture by a master hand. It is not that the topicks are ill chosen, but that they are merely chosen,—scarcely has the satirist

alighted on one fault before he is on the wing to another. It appears indeed as if he had not settled his plan. A reproof of inordinate ambition in minds not prepared for power by experience, was the object which he contemplated at first;—*Γυμνασαι πρωτον, ω μακαριε, και μαθε α δι μαδονια ιεναι επι της πολεως, προτερον δε μη*—but he wanders to vices and follies incompatible with the opening; and we have strictures on low passions and mean feelings, excellent indeed in their kind, but so independent of one another, as to form a most incongruous whole.

The sixth Satire is more happily combined. It bears evident marks of a later hand; and is indeed, the most pleasant and practical of our author's works. The Fifth, however, is his most elaborate performance. It is a tribute of duty to his preceptor, and its commencement is as honourable to his heart as it is favourable to his reputation. It is, in fact, highly poetical and exquisitely tender. In the concluding part, in which he treats of pure liberty, he appears to less advantage. It is the grown school-boy reciting his lesson; and labouring to shew his attentive master how fully he had imbibed his tenets, and how deeply and intimately he had profited by his instruction.

So much of this Satire, and, generally speaking, of all the rest, is founded upon the doctrines of the Porch, that it will be difficult for the reader to appreciate correctly either the moral or the poetical excellencies and defects of our author without some knowledge of its leading principles. To facilitate

this attainment, I shall have recourse to a part of the portrait of the sect, drawn by the Dean of Westminster, who, in his “Paganism and Christianity compared,” has comprised in an eloquent and spirited summary, whatever is most desirable for this purpose.

“To the portrait of this sect (the Epicureans) succeeds one of an opposite nature. Cicero observes, indeed, that the contention with the Stoicks was of a more noble and exalted kind than that which had been maintained with the Epicureans. These were destitute of logick, and possessed neither acuteness in debate, nor profoundness in learning.— In both these points the Stoicks were manifestly superior. A minute and anxious attention to logick, was a distinguishing mark of that sect. Indeed Zeno had placed this science at the head of all philosophy; and his scholars were well instructed in the management of their reasoning powers, and in every variety of disputation.—

“But, together with their logick, the morals of the Stoicks were of an higher cast than those of the Epicureans. Their *summum bonum* was virtue, or, according to the favourite term of Cato, the *honestum*. And in the maintenance of this principle, they exceeded the Peripateticks themselves. These indeed gave the supreme rank to virtue; and this they asserted in a tone the most decisive. Yet they allowed, that, in addition to the goods of the mind and body, the conjunction of which was indispensable to the *summum bonum*, certain external ad-

vantages were also desirable, in order to leave no reasonable wish of happiness unsatisfied. On the other hand, the Stoicks positively denied, that either the nature or the name of good was to be attributed to any thing but the *honestum*. This was the sole object of a life directed to a right end, and in this, without the concurrence of any other reputed good, consisted the true and proper happiness of man.

“ Thus far the Stoick appears to be superior to the Epicurean in the choice of his moral principle, and in the means of impressing it on the reason of mankind. But he soon forfeited the advantages with which he began, through the unbending and injudicious rigour with which he employed them. It was the peculiarity of his sect to push every principle to excess. And thus it happened, that they eventually injured the very cause of reason and virtue which they attempted to promote. The natural result of their study of logick, ought to have been such a lucid arrangement of their doctrines, and such a restriction of them within the bounds of right reason, as should convince their adversaries, and make objection hopeless. But labouring at demonstration with too much strictness, they clouded what might have been clear. Overstraining the arguments which promised to be most serviceable to their cause, they deprived them of their natural evidence ; and feeling, or affecting to feel, that the terms hitherto employed in philosophy, were not sufficiently exact to express the niceness of their

conceptions, they became unnecessarily technical, or grew obscure through an ill-judged attempt at a discrimination which knew not when to be satisfied.

“ It was still more to be desired, that the moral principles which they so loftily maintained, should have been adapted, with temper and judgment, to the understandings and affections of mankind. But this salutary application was prevented by the extravagance unfortunately so characteristick of the Stoical school. While the *honestum* was pronounced to be the only object of human pursuit, the needful offices and tender relations of common life appeared to be extinguished ; and mankind, instead of being attracted to goodness thus proclaimed, maintained a suspicious distance from it. Gravity was forced into severity, and constancy into ferociousness. Virtue learnt to clothe herself in perpetual frowns, and walked abroad for the terror of the world. Moral duty became at once narrow and impracticable, refined and intolerant, unintelligible and forbidding. Little was left to complete this view of the unamiable temper and habitual gloom of the Stoick ; yet even this was filled up by the rage and envy of philosophical party. Swelling with the arrogance of his own sufficiency, he stoutly denied the possession of wisdom or virtue to the rest of mankind. Though, in certain points, the suggestions of that reason which is common to all, produced in his mind an unavoidable concurrence with other men, he scorned to confess it. And

though, on other occasions, he availed himself of the labours of a rival school, he loudly maintained his independence and originality, and affected to despise the aid of all foreign resources. While he meanly borrowed the substance of his philosophy, he proudly concealed it ; and clandestinely adopting the doctrines of the Peripateticks and Academicians, stamped them with a new name, and asserted them as his own.—

“ From the rigorous maintenance of their leading maxim, that the *honestum* is the sole object of life, came the extraordinary doctrine of the equality of all vices. In this agreed their principal authorities, Chrysippus, Persæus, and Zeno ; for as it was argued, if that which is true, cannot have any thing truer than truth, and if that which is false cannot be exceeded by any thing more false than falsehood ; neither can deceit be greater than deceit ; nor is one sin greater than another ; therefore they are equal. This was supposed to be proved by a familiar and convincing example. Two men are walking to Canobus ; one of them is a hundred stadia from it: the other only one ; but both of them are equally not in Canobus. On the same principle, therefore, it was concluded, that those who are guilty of vices, reputed to be, some of them greater, and some less, are equally not in the *honestum*. Their actions are no part of virtue ; and as there is no medium, they must all equally belong to the class of the *turpia*.

“ A similar reasoning was employed concerning

that wisdom which belongs to the *honestum*. Every man was pronounced to be either wise or foolish ; and each of these cases was to be understood in a strict and absolute manner. No gradations were allowed, for here also the existence of a medium was denied. With similar extravagance was it contended by the sect, that he who once became wise, must always continue so ; that there was a chain of connection between the virtues, and that he who possessed one, necessarily drew the rest after it, and therefore possessed all ; and finally, that the man thus gifted, was thenceforth free from all possibility of vice or error.

“ It remains to see, in what manner the Stoicks deduced their philosophy from the nature of man.

“ The Stoicks, like the Epicureans, took their view of man from the first stage of life. From this, however, they drew a different conclusion. Every animal, they observed, as soon as it is born, shews a disposition to preserve its being, and to love whatever is promotive of its welfare. On the same principle, it dislikes and avoids whatever appears to have a contrary tendency. This they pointed out in the actions of infants, who shew a desire to obtain the things which are salutary to them, and a dread of the opposites. But the difference of opinion began concerning the motive, to which these actions were to be attributed. The Stoicks dreaded to admit that pleasure was the primary object of nature, lest an inlet should be given to what was base in itself, and lest human life should be de-

graded by the establishment of so unworthy a principle. They therefore attributed these early actions of the animal to self-love, as the only motive, and contended, that this was previous to any sensation of pleasure. To the guardianship of this salutary motive is the infant committed, till some comprehension of things is obtained, and some insight is formed into the arts of life.—

“ It might have been sufficiently creditable for the Stoicks to provide in this manner for the wholesome operation of wisdom. But it seemed to be a decree of their own fate, that whatever they began with reason, should end in absurdity and rant; and that a momentary sobriety should be amply avenged by a return of their constitutional extravagance. The wise man, thus formed from the first punctum of intelligence, is preternaturally enlarged, till he fills up all the view, and hides every other object. With the qualities thus aggregated in his person, he is declared to be perpetually fortunate and supremely happy. He is safe by prerogative, entire in himself, and free from all those accidents to which men less highly gifted are always exposed. He is moved by no danger, and hindered by no difficulty. He is in want of nothing, nay, he is in full possession of all things. In short, he is a king, in a truer sense than Tarquin; a dictator, of a larger and higher authority, than Sylla.—And he is possessed of true liberty; for he obeys no master from without. He is invincible too: for, though his body be enchained, his mind is free, and mocks

every attempt at restraint.—Finally, death is in his own power ; for, whenever it appears eligible to the philosophy which he professes, he voluntarily quits life, that he may shew the perfection of his wisdom, and the agreement of his mind with the supreme rule of nature.—

“ Such is the termination of the Stoical wisdom, and by this absurd and impious jargon was the detestable practice of suicide connected with the most arrogant assumption of virtue, and made an eventual part of the duty of man !”*

The reader must not imagine that any of these defects were recognised by our youthful bard. To his ardent and believing mind, the doctrine of the school appeared complete in every part ; and he seems to have been as little moved by the ridicule, as convinced by the reason, which had been so frequently directed against it.

Both, however, had been employed with good effect by Horace. To the crazy Stertinius, a Stoick *in puris naturalibus*, a Chrysippus stripped of dialectick sophistry, he commits the easy task of confuting one of their most famous paradoxes, by artfully encouraging him to advance it in direct terms, without the most distant suspicion of its frantick extravagance. But he has condescended (in the third Satire of his first Book) to treat with more seriousness another of their prime axioms,—that

* Lectures to the King's Scholars at Westminster, by the Rev. J. Ireland, D. D. 8vo. 1814.

all actions, so far as they are right or wrong, are equally so.

When the first race of men (he says) roamed the forest in search of food, they were solely actuated by animal instincts, and brute force decided every debate.

“ Could no unhusked acorn leave the tree,
But there was challenge made, whose it should be.”

This state of anarchy, in which every man's hand was lifted against every man, must have terminated in the extinction of the species, had not the gradual improvement of their rude and scanty language enabled them to communicate their thoughts with some precision, and thus facilitated the establishment of society, of which all perceived the necessity. It was seen that the anger created by an injury would eagerly inflict a vengeance disproportioned to the evil endured; and that the office of awarding justice between contending parties could be more safely intrusted to the law, which would rather consult the damage done to the community, than to the individual. This struck directly at the paradox just noticed; for as it could not be maintained, that he who robbed an orchard was an equal offender against society with him who violated a temple, and scrupled not—to *melt down the Thunderer*; so neither could it be affirmed, that they should be visited with an equal degree of vengeance. Penal laws, therefore, constitute the basis of equity, by virtue of which crimes are punished,

not as they affect the sufferer, but as they endanger the security and well-being of the State.

But Persius, though familiar with his predecessor's mode of reasoning, overlooks or rejects his conclusions. He takes every thing advanced by his teacher for granted, and, like Stertinius, produces the wildest of his positions without seeming to entertain a doubt that they either had been, or could be, called in question. In fact, his philosophy is not very profound. He is not, however, for this the less sanguine in its propagation, or the less earnest for its success ; and he struggles to extend its influence, and familiarize its mysteries, by adapting his expressions to the conception of the unlearned, without seeing that in thus voluntarily foregoing many of the advantages of poetry, he was not, in any material degree, promoting the comprehension of his system among the profane ; while, by occasionally stripping it of its characteristick language, he was not recommending it to the initiated.

To this idolatrous adherence to the Sect (for his zeal is shewn even in his wanderings) somewhat of the obscurity with which we so frequently hear him charged, ought, in justice, perhaps, to be attributed. It is perpetually necessary to advert not only to the tenour of their creed, but to their peculiar habits of thinking and speaking : to their mode of diction, at once abrupt and acute ; to their severe affectation of conciseness ; to their frequent use of medical metaphors, and of terms taken from low and vulgar occupations, and applied to the

mind ; to their ill-baked jars, their warped measures, their overlaid metals, their incorrect balances, &c., which, wherever they occur in the pages of our author, bring with them an air of harshness, and constraint.

To listen, however, to the outcries against the obscurity of Persius, it might also be supposed that he was abandoned to neglect, as a writer whom no ingenuity could elucidate, and on whom, therefore, all pains would be unprofitably spent : but the case is far otherwise ; no Latin classick perhaps, (with the exception of Horace) has been more frequently translated, or more sedulously brought before the publick * It would seem to follow from this apparent inconsistency, either that the criticks were paying a compliment to their own perspicacity, or that the darkness in which their author is involved is not so palpable as they delight to represent it.

It does not appear when, or by whom this clamour was first raised. His contemporaries certainly knew nothing of this obscurity. It is clear from Martial that, not many years after his death, his Satires were in every one's hand ; and Quintilian, who expressly requires perspicuity in a poet, and whom a defect of this nature therefore could not have escaped, tells us, not only that his reputation was considerable, but that it was founded on

* The Berne editor (J. R. Sinner) took the pains to reckon up all the editions and translations which had come to his knowledge, and found them to amount to one hundred and ten. This census was taken more than sixty years ago.

genuine merit. It is certain, however, that the opinion here alluded to, is of no recent date. St. Jerome is said to have found his *Satires* unintelligible, and a similar story is told of another early father of the church. If they did not understand his writings, they, at least, made a liberal use of them — particularly St. Jerome, whose works abound with quotations from him, many of them of considerable extent :—but the report is a mere fabrication, and utterly unworthy of notice. It was embraced however in this country, and our criticks and translators appear to have been amongst the last to approach the “cloudy storme, from which light wanted force to breake,” and explore their way *through the palpable obscure*.

Skelton, undoubtedly a man of learning, calls Persius (not unhappily for his mode of thought and expression) *a writer of problems diffuse*; and a sensible old critick of Elizabeth’s days observes, “I know not why we should so affect Persius, since with his obscurity he laboureth not to affect us.” “Learned men, however (he candidly adds) have discovered much choice philosophy in his darke expressions:” and it appears not only from the compliments paid to Holyday on his version,* but from

* One of his correspondents (whom Holyday modestly terms “a judicious friend”) tells him that—“when he conversed in this familiar manner with Persius, his witte stooped farre below the elevation of its owne worth;” and applies to him what was said of Claudius and his works, by Scaliger. *Solo argumento ignobiliore oppressus, additi de ingenio suo quantum decet materia*”

his own language, that, when he wrote, the poet was generally deemed incomprehensible.* “To excite thy attention, judicious reader, (he says,) I may, without ambition say, I present thee with a New thing, PERSIUS UNDERSTOOD.”

But Stoicism alone is, after all, chargeable with the least considerable part of the obscurity, or as it should rather be termed, the difficulty with which the pages of our author are so universally reproached. Other causes must be sought; and, fortunately, the search need not be either long or laborious.

There is something in the literary history of Rome by which it is distinguished from that of almost every other people. The infancy of nations is usually the period of invention; the season most propitious to the wild and luxuriant shoots of genius: but from the age of Romulus, this restless and turbulent people were perpetually occupied in domestick feuds, or foreign warfare, till, about the termination of the second Punick war, they found themselves, almost at the same moment, in possession of boundless wealth, and of uncontrollable power. Together with a high degree of civilization, they rapidly attained a taste for the arts and sciences of the people whom they had submitted to their arms; thus overleaping the whole period of invention, and falling at once upon that

* Hence we may account, perhaps, for that diffusiveness noticed at p. vii. It was a sacrifice to the general opinion of the age.

of imitation. Philosophy, indeed, they rather translated than imitated; but poetry, in all its branches, they servilely copied from the Greeks: and it is not a little curious to observe the most eminent of their writers glorifying themselves—not for striking out any novelties in the subject or substance of verse; but for being the first, respectively, to fit the measures of Simonides or Sappho, of Hesiod or Theocritus, to the Latian lyre. In Satire, indeed, one of their ablest criticks claims a kind of originality for them; but he evidently refers to the writers of an age immediately preceding his own: had he gone back to the time of *old Metellus*, he would have discovered strong proofs of imitation, and probably seen cause to admit that what he had considered as originality, was merely improvement. Both Horace and Juvenal affirm that they followed (i. e. imitated) Lucilius, who was himself a follower of some elder poet. It appears not a little curious that two writers so essentially different in style and manner should boast of working after the same model. We must be satisfied, however, with their assertions for we have only the ruins of Lucilius; fragments so disjointed and scattered, that we cannot ascertain the fact, nor pretend to decide from examination, with what latitude they meant to be understood. Persius professedly takes for his imitation the Old Comedy:—whether immediately, or, as it might come to his hands, rudely cast into the form of Satire by older writers, can

not be told ; certain, however, it is, that the plan of his work is strictly dramattick.

This alone would not be productive of much embarrassment, had the author, like Horace, contented himself with a reasonable use of his freedom ; but, unfortunately, he may be almost said to abuse the license of dialogue. His speakers are so numerous as to create confusion ; and so little observant of keeping, as to maintain opposite, or, at least, varying opinions : not unfrequently too, like the forms raised to tantalize Macbeth, they *come like shadows, so depart*, and are lost to us before the echo of their approach has died away. In many places Persius silently drops his own character, and tries to assume not only the language, but the modes of thinking of his opponent : this, also, tends to perplexity ; for the line of separation is either not marked at all, or traced so faintly, that the nicest attention can scarcely discover where one ends and the other begins.

From this source, no little part of the obscurity so vehemently objected to our author, naturally and necessarily flows : for that he affected, as is said, to throw a cloud over his meaning to baffle the sagacity, or escape the resentment of Nero, appears altogether improbable. The story of the alteration made by Cornutus in the fable of Midas, (p. 46,) is almost too silly for the place in which it first appeared. Nero, it is more than probable, was quite as familiar with poetick history as Persius

himself; and fully as capable of apprehending the purport of an allusion to a popular tale, as the most perspicacious Stoick of his time. If we were not habituated to the complacent vanity of the commentators, it might provoke a smile to see one dull pedant after another congratulating himself on having detected a mythological or historical sarcasm which eluded the sagacity of the person at whom it was levelled; though that person had infinitely more information on the subject than himself, and was, (as they are all pleased to admit) sufficiently alert in the search of offensive truth! It is quite edifying to hear M. Raoul on this subject. We are incessantly tempted, he says, in reading Persius, to believe ourselves transported to the den of Triphominus.—“It is,” he continues, “more than probable that he purposely enveloped himself in a thick veil, and” (—from the admirable reasoning which follows, it would seem that M. Raoul had actually been *transported to this den*)—“that a great number of his verses, of which the allusions escape us, were as clear as noon day to all the people of Rome, *except Nero!*” Preface xi. There is no proof whatever, in the lines of Persius, that he thought more of Nero than of any other person. It is not a specifick poem, but a system of poetry which is so pleasantly ridiculed in the first Satire; and if Nero was a favourer of this depraved style, (as was probably the case,) he only erred with the noble Titi and Trossuli; and was no otherwise interested in the criticism of our author than as one

of that tasty and fashionable school. Whatever there might be of peril in attacking this, Persius certainly incurred ; but there are many reasons for believing that the emperor himself (who was, by no means, a bad versifier,) was far less impatient of criticism on his talents for poetry, than on his voice, and his skill in musick. Like the clown in *Twelfth Night*, he had a *sweet breast* ; and if this were once admitted by the cognoscenti, his verses (at least, at this early period of his reign,) might probably be parodied without subjecting the unhappy wit to the hazard of a voyage to Egypt, or to the Ægean sea,

———— scopulosque frequentes
Exulibus magnis.

But what, in fact, had Persius to dread ? Recitation, it is true, might be imprudent, and publication dangerous ; but he hazarded neither : his friends were few and sure, and apparently of his own mode of thinking, both in matters of taste and philosophy ; and he had nothing beyond these. Politicks are studiously kept out of sight : the patriots of the republick share neither his gratitude nor his admiration ; he crowns his temples with no *wreath of dark myrtle* on the birth-days of Brutus and Cassius ; the *sacred senate* is not once named by him ; and Perillus and Damocles obtain more of his notice than all the victims of tyranny from the subversion of the commonwealth to the period in which, at the age of twenty-nine, he closed his blameless labours with his life.

But if Persius borrowed the form of his Satires from the drama, he copied (say the criticks) the language of them, from his immediate predecessor. That he *conveyed* far too many expressions from Horace, must be admitted ; his larcenies, however, seldom extend beyond the mere words, which were probably considered as common property ; and it is really matter of surprise how, with such unbounded predilection for his phraseology, he should manifest such provoking contempt for his reasoning. His object, indeed, was different. Horace probably wished for little more than to correct *les travers de l'esprit*, and to establish a kind of conventional morality, in which the balance between virtue and vice should be fairly struck, and the pursuit of both checked on this side pain ; but our poet had other and higher views, and he therefore forces his imitations beyond their original purpose, or, as Casaubon expresses himself, *quæ tractaverat Horatius, alia via, ac ratione diversa explicare aggreditur*, and adapts them to his peculiar tenets ; not much, perhaps, to the advantage of their perspicuity.

But Persius is still a poet—thrown away, if the reader pleases, upon an unpoetical creed—but, nevertheless, with very considerable claims upon the applause of mankind. What he appears to want is genius, or that portion of it which comes under the faculty of invention, and in which both Horace and Juvenal greatly excelled. Had his mind been as comprehensive as his fancy was

quick and fervid, he would not be far behind the best of the Roman writers ; but his deficiency in this respect is strikingly obvious : hence, though his *Satires*, generally speaking, are less diversified than those of Horace and Juvenal, he seldom appears to have taken a comprehensive view of his subject. Whatever be the outline, it is not adequately filled up : little pieces of exquisite colouring, finished with all the painful nicety of a Flemish picture, embellish the canvas ; but the master hand is not there to combine them in an harmonious whole. In a word, the imagination of our author is neither rich, nor copious, nor flowing ; and he therefore breaks down his materials into minute parts, on which he ordinarily dwells with too much complacency—

Captus amore loci cursum obliviscitur, ancep-
Quo fluat, et dulces necit in omne moras.

This is more particularly the case, where the maxims of his school are to be recommended to admiration ; on other occasions, and when he is borne away by the natural feelings of an ardent and virtuous mind, he pours forth a strain of full and exquisite harmony, that cannot be heard without delight.

How Dryden could be so unjust to the merits of Persius as to affirm that he had no poetry in him, it is hard to guess. If we even suppose that he only compared him with Juvenal, whose *long resounding march, and energy divine* he confessedly does not equal, yet so many beautiful pas-

sages are scattered through his works, that no one alive to the charms of verse, (and the perception of Dryden, though not quick, was strong,) could possibly be insensible to his claims. We must therefore be content to set it down as one of those careless assertions which he was in the habit of making, and which, had he written again on the subject, he would, with equal levity, perhaps, have disproved.

Our poet (as he says of himself) was prone to satirick mirth — *petulanti splene cachinno* : this, I think, may be fairly questioned ; though he appears so convinced of it as to put a similar description of himself into the mouth of his preceptor — *ingenue defigere ludo*. In his attempts at wit he rarely succeeds ; his jests are commonly frigid ; and if he laughs outright, less fortunate than his rammish Centurion, he generally laughs alone ; his irony, indeed, is unusually caustick ; and prejudice itself must allow that he is a great and unrivalled master of humour :—not of that refined species which is found in such perfection in the Epistles, and even in some of the Satires of Horace ; but of that broader kind which arises from a grotesque and extravagant exaggeration or diminution of objects, and of which the harvest-feast of Vectidius, and several other descriptions, which will readily occur to the reader, furnish very amusing examples. The pleasure is occasionally heightened by a felicity of language peculiar to the poet. No writer of his time, — no writer, in fact, of any time, with

the exception of Shakspeare, ever used such picturesque terms as Persius ; his words have a kind of motion and life about them, which carries the reader beyond the sober import of the expression, and flatters at once his fancy and his understanding.

These vivid gleams, however, are rare : — *short and far between*, are the gratifications which they afford : for the poet, with fatal perversity, eagerly sacrifices this, with every other natural advantage, to the prejudices of his school, and compresses and stiffens his language, till it has commonly as little left of life as of grace and ease. In general, says Peacham, (the old critick quoted above) “ the style of Persius is broken, froward, harsh and unpleasing.” This is somewhat severely expressed ; yet it cannot be denied that though vehement, elevated, and brilliant, it is too frequently abrupt, arid, and over strained ; crowded with violent tropes, and darkened with unwonted and even unwarrantable inversions.

The personal character of our author has been already noticed, in the Introduction to Juvenal. His moral qualities, indeed, can scarcely be too frequently or too highly commended : he was grateful, and affectionate ; of rigid and austere virtue in himself, and in his abhorrence of vice, consistent, ardent, and sincere. He never compromises his satire, and we have only to lament, that in the warmth of inexperienced youth and zeal, his censure is indiscriminately severe. He

is a moral Draco, who writes his dispensations in blood. From an intensity of feeling, quickened, perhaps, by his mode of education, he appears to attribute a degree of importance to many things very disproportionate to the opinion generally conceived of them; and his surprise, as well as his anger, is excited at perceiving that mankind, in general, are not prepared to sympathize with his boiling indignation. This had not escaped Koenig “*Quid ? si ea castigasset, quæ Juvenalis exagitat, quibus tandem verbis eum usurum fuisse existimemus ? Verum illæ dictiones, quas adhibuit, rebus, quæ notantur adcommodate sunt, nec dici potest, cum indignatione abreptum virgineum illum pudorem, quem vulgo illi tribuerunt, exuisse ; quum illa verba tunc vel a viris honestis usurparentur nec Cicero erubuerit in Philippicis suis de rebus fœdioribus verbis etiam obscenioribus uti.*”

There is justice in many of these remarks :—for that Persius was really modest and reserved cannot be doubted. He has no allusions to the depravities of the female sex, nor to the abominations which Horace notices with disgraceful levity, and Juvenal reprehends with rank and disgusting freedom. It is, therefore, highly probable, not only, as Koenig observes, that these obscene and liberal terms were used by grave and respectable men; but that they had, in some measure, lost their primitive signification, and acquired a conventional meaning, not altogether offensive to severer ears.

Yet if this be admitted in its fullest extent, it will involve our author in a charge of some inconsistency, not to say injustice, for he appears, in more than one instance, to give these expressions a literal sense. A mode of recitation like that to which Persius attributes such obscene effects, in the first Satire, we should probably call meretricious, nor would this metaphorical term lead to any misapprehension ; but our author, the partizan of a more sober and manly style, (as it frequently happens in cases where the controversy does not turn upon facts,) seems to have availed himself of this figurative language, first by taking it in a literal sense, and afterwards by pushing it on to extravagant and circumstantial exaggeration. Catullus, nearly in the same way, takes vulgar metaphors in a literal sense, and enlarges upon them seriously ; a circumstance which has bewildered some of the commentators, and scandalized more.—In Persius's time, such a mode of expression was easily understood. I have, as a faithful translator, rendered his words in corresponding language ; but whether the conclusion which the English reader will naturally draw from it—that obscene poems were publicly recited with indecent gesticulations,—be correct in its fullest extent, I cannot, and, indeed, desire not to determine.

His opinion of his own style (as distinguished from that of this class of writers) is given in the fifth Satire ; and we may be confident, from the character of the speaker, that it is advanced with

perfect seriousness : yet it seems at variance with his actual language ; and has therefore perplexed and confounded the criticks beyond measure. The last of them (Koenig) says, “ *Verba togæ, i. e. Verba in sermonis vulgaris consuetudine versantia.*” This, perhaps, the poet himself would be slow to admit.—But I am fortunately freed from the hazard of further conjectures, by the kindness of a friend, (the Right Hon. John Hookham Frere,) whose explanation of this long contested passage will, I believe, be found as satisfactory, as it is learned and ingenious.

“ Verba togæ sequeris junctura callidus acti
 Ore teres modico pallentis radere mores
 Doctus, et ingenuo culpam deligere ludo.”

“ Such is the character which Persius gives of his own style, and, as we may fairly presume, that he does not deviate from it at the moment that he is employed in describing it ; we may take it as a fair sample by which the question of his intentional or accidental obscurity may be determined : undoubtedly to a modern reader, the passage presents a striking instance of that perplexed and enigmatical style which is supposed to characterise the writings of Persius ; but if we take his word for it (in any sense in which it can be understood) it manifestly conveys a disavowal of any intentional obscurity, and the whole of the passage consists of phrases which, at the time when Persius wrote, were in all probability true and familiar in the dialect which he professes to adopt.

“ The phrase *Verba togæ* must have signified the language of good society at Rome, as distinguished from that of the populace, (the *tunicatus popellus*,) and from that of the provinces, including a great part of Italy, in which, as you say, in Juvenal,

“ None assumed the toga but the dead.”

“ The toga had fallen into general disuse, among the lower orders in the days of Augustus, and from his reign to the time in which Persius lived, there was sufficient leisure for the invention of a term so obvious. It is well known that phrases which serve to express in a concise and pointed manner their own exclusive claims to refinement and elegance, are readily adopted by the superior classes, and admitted into their particular dialect.

“ Upon a mere calculation of chances, therefore, it may safely be said that it is ten thousand to one that the phrase in question was not invented by Persius; but that it owed its origin to some one of the innumerable *dicaces et urbani* who had preceded him, and that he employed it as he found it, as a well known and familiar expression.

Juncturâ callidus acri.

“ Fastidious and scrupulous as we know the Romans to have been in the construction and choice of their language, and addicted at the same time to the most excessive nicety with respect to all objects of domestic luxury, it was natural that among them those terms which were applicable in their original sense to the grosser and more material objects of taste should be transferred by a metaphorical application to designate those qualities which

were the objects of their intellectual and critical approbation.

“ In a much earlier and less luxurious age, we find Lucilius illustrating the artifice of composition by a comparison from the arrangement of a tessellated pavement :

“ Tam lapidi *λεξις* compostæ ut tesserulæ omnes

“ Endo pavimento atque emblemata vermiculato.”

That passion for perfection which is never perhaps more eager and active than when operating upon inferior minds, and directed to trivial objects, had excited among the Romans an emulation equal to that which about the beginning of the last century was prevalent in this country for the attainment of invisible hinges to snuff-boxes; an object, which, since it has been effected, has been esteemed of less importance.

“ The masters of the ancient world were anxious that their furniture, whether of wood or marble, should be constructed in such a manner as to leave the joints imperceptible, not only to the eye, but to the scrutiny of the nail, if, in passing it over the line of juncture, the slightest jar could be perceived, the scruples of fashion were scandalised, and the pride of proprietorship was confounded.

“ There are several expressions in Horace derived from this important foppery, and applied metaphorically to personal accomplishments, and to literary skill—*ad unguem factus homo—notum si callida verbum reddiderit junctura novum.*—*Callidus*, *workmanly*, is here used as it is by Per-

sus, in strict conformity to the metaphor—*acris junctura* may be understood to signify what a workman might call a *sharp joint*, meaning one that was close and accurate. We may safely conclude, I apprehend, that the expression used by Persius, like those of Horace, was familiar and usual in his time—that it had its origin in the manufactory and the shop, and was from thence transferred into the phraseology of the higher orders as indicative of elaborate accuracy either in Literature or Upholstery.

“*Ore teres modico* is descriptive of the natural and easy mode of recitation suited to compositions in a familiar style, as opposed to the stretch-mouthed declamation of the heroick poets. The frequent recurrence, and the obligation of attending upon poetical rehearsals, is mentioned not only in instances in which it might be considered as a ludicrous exaggeration, but seriously by Pliny, among others, as one of the main inconveniences attendant upon a residence in Rome. It is hardly to be imagined but that an occupation which took up so much of the leisure of a refined and fastidious people must have given rise to a variety of phrases such as that of which Persius here makes use.

“ In the remainder of the passage,

“ *pallentes radere mores*

“ *Doctus, et ingenuo culpam deligere ludo,*”

the images and expression are taken from the spectacles of the Circus. *Radere* means to *graze* with a dart or other missile weapon, which accounts for

pallentes; and as the *ludi gladiatorii* and the *Venationes* of the Circus were almost universally considered as degrading to those who exhibited themselves upon such occasions, the poet, in applying the metaphor to himself, takes care to qualify the word *ludus* by the epithet of *ingenuus*.

“ The games of the Circus must, I should imagine, have furnished a large supply of phrases to the familiar conversational dialect of a people amongst whom they were considered as an object of interest, second only to the immediate necessities of life—*panem et Circenses*. The association of ideas between a satirist reciting and an armed man in a menacing attitude, is not peculiar to Persius, it occurs in Juvenal—*Ense velut stricto quoties Lucilius*, &c.

“ The apparent confusion of metaphors in this passage is a strong proof that it consists of terms in familiar use; an analysis of our common discourse would exhibit an assemblage of the strangest and most incoherent images, which nevertheless pass unnoticed without ever shocking our taste or perplexing the fancy.

“ The fact is, that expressions metaphorical in their origin, by dint of uniform and constant use, cease at last to retain their metaphorical character, and remain in the general mass of language as simple signs to express those ideas which they were originally intended to illustrate.

“ Finally, if Persius is entitled to be believed upon his word, his style was that of the times in which he lived, and if we consider the change

which had taken place in the language of literature, from the style of Cicero to that of Tacitus and Seneca, it would not be too much to infer, a priori, that, in the familiar dialect contemporary with these later authors, a corresponding change must have taken place, which would distinguish it in an equal degree from the familiar language of the time of Horace.

“ Of this familiar dialect thus altered, we have no remaining monument, unless the Satires of Persius should be regarded as exhibiting a specimen of it: considered (as I cannot help considering it) in this point of view, they afford, I apprehend, a very interesting subject for philological research.”

I am unwilling to add to an Essay, already, perhaps, too far extended; but I cannot close my labours without repeating, and with redoubled thankfulness, my acknowledgments to the friends noticed in the Introduction to Juvenal, for their assistance on the present occasion. More especially, my thanks are due to Richard Heber, Esq. Without the advantage of consulting his matchless collection of classical literature, I should scarcely have felt emboldened to commit this volume to the press. Of this gentleman I could say much; but his name will readily suggest to all those who enjoy his acquaintance, every advantage that correct taste, liberal kindness, and active friendship, can convey.

THE
S A T I R E S
OF
P E R S I U S.

Heliconidasque, pallidamque Pirenen l.
 Illis remitto, quorum imagines lambunt

could scarcely be insensible to their real merits: but he was probably (I do not say, justly) prejudiced against them by the injudicious imitation of their language, then so prevalent as to be characteristic of the literature of the age.

It is to little purpose the poet declares that he has no recollection of having drank of the “Caballine fount;” one of those blundering honest souls (Barthius, I believe,) *per quem non licet esse negligentem*, jogs his memory, and tells him that he not only drank of it, but reaped many notable advantages from it:

“—Ut liquore potus Hippocrenæo

“Dat erudita Persius, sed obscura.”

VER. 7. *Thee, Helicon, &c.*] In reading Hall (always a favourite with me) for the purpose of marking his imitations of Juvenal, I was frequently struck with the happy allusions to his immediate predecessor. The following passage, which is taken from his opening poem, has great beauty:

“Trumpets, and reeds, and socks, and buskins fine,

“I them bequeath; whose statues, wandring twine

“Of ivy, mixt with bayes, circlen around,

“Their living temples likewise laurel-bound.”

VER. 10. *Whose busts, &c.*] The Romans were late before they thought much either of busts or books. Sylla laid the foundation of a library in the immense number of volumes collected in his predatory progress through Greece; but Cæsar appears to have been the first who conceived the idea of throwing the collection open to the people. After his death, public libraries rose in various parts of the city. Generally speaking, these collections of books were placed in the temples, or in buildings attached to them; but Augustus and some of his successors had very extensive libraries in the Imperial residence on the Palatine Mount, which were also open to the people.

Thee, Helicon, with all the Nine,
 And pale Pyrene, I resign,
 Unenvied, to the tuneful race,
 Whose busts (of many a fane the grace)

Private libraries were sufficiently common : these, like the former, were appropriately ornamented with the busts of eminent philosophers, statesmen, poets, &c. Of these Persius modestly speaks in this place. He resigns Helicon to the inspired few whose statues, crowned with ivy, graced the shelves of eminent citizens, an honour, to which the obscurity of his humble fame did not entitle him : and which, indeed, Horace himself seems to count among the *humanis majora bonis* :

“ Me doctarum hederæ præmia frontium

“ Diis miscent superis.”

but he will, he says, avail himself of a privilege enjoyed by all, and, mean as his pretensions to the rank of a poet are, deposit (*ipse*) his verses in the public library.*

If *sacra vatum* be taken for an allusion to a particular edifice, (which, in truth, is not necessary,) we may suppose it to be the Library of Apollo, which was the most distinguished, and if we may trust Martial, one of the most recent of these edifices which crowned the Palatine Hill, and to which he ventures to recommend his own book :

“ Jure tuo veneranda novi pete limina templi

“ Reddita Pierio sunt ubi *templa* choro.”

It is to this also that Juvenal alludes :

——— “ iste,

“ Quem colis, et Musarum et Apollinis æde relictæ.”

* A practice somewhat similar to the one established by law among ourselves, prevailed at Rome—i. e. to deposit copies of every literary work in one of the public libraries. If it was good, the librarians probably took care to see it placed there ; if otherwise, the author.

Cantare credas Pegaseium melos.

14

VER. 25. *To such poetick heights, &c.*] The common editions have *cantare credas Pegaseium melos*; some, however, adopt a variation mentioned by the old scholiast, a man of little judgment, and read *Pegaseium nectar*. Undoubtedly, metre is a good thing; common sense, however, is a better; and if one of the two be to give way, the choice need not be long in making. It happens, indeed, in the present case, as it frequently does, that both are reconcileable. Casaubon gives several instances in which the first syllable of $\mu\epsilon\lambda\textcircled{\text{e}}$ is made long; while we might look in vain for an example of the use of *Pegaseium nectar* with *cantare*. That any one should seriously imagine so violent a catachresis to be justified by those unforced and beautiful rhetorical figures adduced from the Greek poets by Koenig and others, is not a little surprising. Here is one of the examples produced from Theocritus to justify the use of the sophistication;

Οὐνεκα οἱ γλυκυ μοισα καλά σομάιος χεε νεκλαρ.

That, lost in wonder, you will swear
Apollo and the Nine are there !

And this is nothing to the purpose. The Muse may indeed pour forth nectar from her lips ; but to sing it surpasses her ability. The quotation from Pindar,

Και ἐγὼ νεκτάρ χυλόν,
Μοισᾶν δόσιν, ἀθλοφόροις
Ἀνδράσιν πεμπῶν, κ. τ. α

is still more idly brought forward. “ Pegaseian nectar,” in a word, is both poetry and sense ; but the instant we attempt to “ warble,” or even to “ croak it,” it loses its character, and becomes mere jargon. If the criticks, after all, will not be satisfied without a Latin authority for the use of *melos* with the first syllable long, Marcilius has one at their service :

“ Matronæ melos complent spectare faventes.”

ENN. *Annal.* xiii.

SATIRE I.

Argument.

There is something peculiar in the opening of this Satire. The poet begins as if he intended a moral essay: and when interrupted by the apposite question of his friend, wanders, without much apparent connection, into a tritcal censure of the wretched taste of the times.

To the contemporaries of Persius, this must have been a very amusing performance — always excepted those whose works form the subject of ridicule:—to us, who are ignorant of the true nature of his parodies, on which much of his satire originally depended, and who cannot, in a single instance, appropriate them with certainty, it is not altogether so pleasant: Enough, however, remains to give a most favourable impression of the humour and good taste of the youthful critic. He begins with expressing his supreme contempt of that mania for public recitation which had already excited the ridicule of Horace, and which, not long after this, called forth the spleen of Juvenal; and gives an amusing picture of one of those versifiers, and his auditory. These are ancient sinners, and delight in impurity. We are next introduced to a younger set, whose passion appears to be the mawkishly tender and delicate, and who die away to the nasal sound of elegiack woe. The cause of this depravation of taste is ingeniously traced to the pedantic nurture of the schools, and the interested and ignorant admiration of sycophants and dependants. The poet then makes a digression to the bar, of which the language was grossly vitiated by a meretricious glare of elocution, and an affected display of rhetorical subtleties: returning to the poets, he parodies and ridicules the favourites of fashion; this excites the alarm of his friend, and draws forth some cautious advice, which, as generally happens, only serves to render the writer more daring, and to give a spirited conclusion to the Satire.

A. PERSII FLACCI

SATIRÆ.

[SAT. I. VER. 1—4.]

O CURAS hominum! o quantum est in rebus
inane!

“Quis leget hæc?” Min’ tu istud ais? “Nemo,
Hercule.” Nemo?

“Vel duo, vel nemo; turpe et miserabile!” Quare?
Ne mihi Polydamas, et Troïades Labeonem

VER. 1. *Alas, for man! &c.*] Sir W. Drummond pleasantly notices the mass of recondite wisdom which Casaubon supposed to be conveyed in this simple passage: but he misapprehends the commentator when he imagines that he termed it a “facetious” opening of the Satire. By *satiricus cachinnus*, Casaubon meant *an angry sneer*; and the object of his interminable criticism on the words, is to prove that they possess the severe gravity of an academick thesis. Casaubon is, indeed, extravagantly laudatory: he finds a great resemblance between *O curas hominum*, and the opening of Ecclesiastes! and is persuaded that if the Romans had been as well acquainted with the Hebrews as with the Greeks, they would, at once, have exclaimed that Persius had pilfered the expression from the Royal Preacher.

But though the verse may not contain all that was seen in it

SATIRES

OF

PERSIUS.

[SAT. I. V. 1—6.]

ALAS, for man! how vain are all his cares!

And oh! what bubbles, his most grave affairs!

“Tush! who will read such thread-bare—?”

‘This to me?

“Not one, by Jove.” Not one? “Well! two, or three;

Or rather—none: a piteous case, in truth!”

Why piteous? *lest Polydamas*, forsooth,

by Casaubon, it is not altogether so vague and irrelevant as some of the criticks have been pleased to represent it. It is connected with the *Scribimus indocti*, &c. which follows; though the sudden intervention of a new speaker appears to have diverted the poet’s attention for a moment, from the immediate subject of his satire.

VER. 6. *Lest Polydamas*, &c.] The criticks are sorely scandalized at this designation of Nero, which must have been detected at an early period, as it is noticed by the pseudo-Cornutus; and it is not improbable but some blundering courtier may have addressed that prince on the occasion, as Goldsmith is said to have done a late statesman on the appearance of the Letters to Malagrida — “I wonder why they should

Prætulerint ? nugæ ! Non, si quid turbida Roma
 Elevet, accedas ; examenve improbum in illa
 Castiges trutina : nec te quæsiveris extra.

call you Polydamas, Sire, for Polydamas was an honourable man !”

It may be doubted, however, whether Persius had any thing more in view than to point out the leaders of the fashionable taste in poetry, by an expression as readily applied as understood. The Greek poets, and above all Homer, were, to say the least, as familiar to the Romans as they are to us ; and the application of passages from them to passing events, created no ambiguity in the mind of the reader. The ancients quoted them, as we do Shakspeare and Milton, without meaning to be literally interpreted. The purport was well comprehended, and the sense of the extract stretched no further than was necessary. The letters of Cicero are full of such happy applications of his reading, and, indeed, the very passage before us, is given by him : “ *Αἰδεομαι non Pompeium modo,*” (he was obliged to particularise here) “ *sed Τρωας και Τρωαδας,*” &c. and Atticus, we may be confident, was at no loss for the rest of his meaning.

With respect to Labeo, nothing more is known of him than is told by the pseudo-Cornutus ; who says, that he translated the Iliad and Odyssey : one line of the former work he has happily preserved :

Ὀμρον βεβρωδῶις Πριάμον, Πριάμοιο τε παῖδας, *Lib. iv. 34.*

“ *Crudum manduces Priamum Priamique pisinnos :*”

from which it appears that Nero, if he indeed patronized the poet, was an admirer of literal versions, after the manner of Dr. Trapp ; who, in the notes to his Virgil, has *done* the line into English in a style not altogether unworthy of his great prototype :

“ And eat up Priam, and his children raw.”

Some of the commentators suppose that Labeo had the

*And Troy's proud dames, pronounce my merits fall,
Beneath their Labeo's! I can bear it all.*

Nor should my friend, though still, as fashion
 sways,
The purblind town conspire to sink or raise,
Determine, as her wavering beam prevails,
And trust his judgment to her coarser scales.
O! not abroad for vague opinion roam;
The wise man's bosom is his proper home:

honour of fathering a few of the Emperor's verses; but (besides that Nero was probably the better poet of the two) he was much too eager for fame himself, to transfer the chance of it to any other person.

VER. 11. *Determine, as her wavering beam, &c.*] *Examenve improbum in illa Castiges trutina.* Holiday, who has endeavoured, not very successfully, to introduce these terms into his text, has explained them very correctly in his notes. *Lanx*, he says, is the scale, *libra* the beam, *examen* the tongue, and *trutina* the cavity in which it plays. There is no dispute, however, about the general meaning of the words: though the commentators, as far as I know, have not fallen upon the true sense of the passage. Persius is already got to one of those technical illustrations, in which his masters, the Stoicks, so much delighted: *examenve improbum*, &c. means, to correct the errors of an apothecary's or goldsmith's balance by a common pair of scales, such as are used in weighing bulky commodities—a process sufficiently absurd. Cicero has a similar metaphor in the second book of his *Orator*, where he speaks of subjects suited to popular, and to philosophical discussion: *Hæc enim nostra oratio multitudini est accomodanda, ad oblectandos animos, ad impellendos, ad ea probanda, quæ non aurificis statera, sed quadam populari trutina examinantur.* § 159.

Nam Romæ quis non—? ah, si fas dicere! sed fas
Tunc, quum ad canitiem, et nostrum istud vivere
triste

Aspexi, et nucibus facimus quæcumque relictis,
Quum sapimus patruos: — tunc, tunc, ignoscite.
“Nolo.”

Quid faciam? sed sum petulanti splene cachinno,
Scribimus inclusi, numeros ille, hic pede liber,
Grande aliquid, quod pulmo animæ prælargus
anhelet.

Scilicet hæc populo, pexusque togaque recenti,
Et natalitia tandem cum sardonyche, albus,

VER. 16. ———— *When I behold, &c.*] Here again is an attempt, like that in the Prologue, (just as the Satire begins to grow intelligible,) to mislead enquirers as to the real author. Persius evidently wishes us to understand (though his purpose is rather implied than expressed,) that he is advanced in years, and looks back, from a distance, on the *nuts*, and other playthings of the boy; not, as some of the translators have it, as one of his Censorial topicks, but as one of the characteristicks of the time of life which justifies him in assuming the office.

The popularity of Persius must have been considerable soon after his death, and his authority of some weight even among the criticks by profession, since Quintilian quotes a part of this passage as an example of the figure which he calls *partium mutatione*. *Ut in Satira*—nostrum istud vivere triste—*cum infinitivo verbo sit usus pro appellatione, nostram enim vitam vult intelligi.*

VER. 30. *Prepares a grand rehearsal, &c.*] I have already noticed both the extraordinary fondness of the Romans for these rehearsals, (Juv. vol. i. p. 5.) and the zeal and anxiety of the less popular writers to collect audiences for them. That poet

And Rome is—"What?" Ah, might the truth be told!—

And, sure it may, it must.—

When I behold

What fond pursuits have form'd our prime employ,
Since first we dropt the play-things of the boy,
To gray maturity,—to this late hour,
When every brow frowns with Censorial power,
Then, then—"O yet suppress this carping mood."
Impossible.—I could not, if I wou'd;
For nature framed me of satyrick mould,
And spleen, too petulant to be controll'd.

Immured within our studies, we compose;
Some, shackled metre; some, free-footed prose,
But all, bombast! stuff, which the breast must strain,
And the swoln lungs puff forth with awkward pain.

'Tis done! and now the bard, elate and proud,
Prepares a grand rehearsal for the crowd.—
The desk he mounts, in birth-day splendour bright,
Comb'd and perfumed, and robed in dazzling white;

laughs at those who fastened on people in the publick walks,
and forced their verses upon them; a more cruel annoyance
than private recitation.

The satire of Persius, however, is more poignant than that of his successor. The objects of it are of high rank, *ingentes Titos*; and the depravity of the age is indignantly characterized by the meretricious language of the reciter, and the indecent and extravagant applause which follows it.

VER. 31. ——— in birth-day splendour] *Et natalitia tandem cum sardonyche.* By a birth-day sardonyx, Madan says, the

Sede legens celsa ; liquido cum plasmate guttur '
Möbile collueris, patranti fractus oculo.

Hie, neque more probo videas, neque voce serena

Ingentes trepidare Titos, cum carmina lumbum

Intrant, et tremulo scalpuntur ubi intima versu.

Tun', vetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas ?

Auriculis, quibus et dicas cute perditus, ohe !

poet probably meant one that had been presented to the man on that day ; but this does not give the full force of the satire. The most solemn festival which a Roman knew, was that of his birth : on the anniversary of that day, they dressed themselves in all the magnificence which their circumstances allowed, and, after the customary sacrifices, sat at home, in state, to receive their friends, none of whom came without a present in their hands. It is to this practice that Persius alludes : and his indignation is directed at this egregious coxcomb, who puts on all the splendour of a high festival on the simple occasion of reciting a paltry poem. The expression in the text is general, though a ring, set with precious stones, undoubtedly made a part of the show. Dryden gives the passage thus—

“ A birth-day jewel bobbing at his ear,”

which I took at first for one of those careless lines that sometimes escaped him, in translating : but he has the same strange expression in his notes. “ The poet who was about to rehearse, (he says) borrowed a new gown, or scoured his old one, and adorned his ears with jewels,” &c. He did not see that this was one of the Titi, who had little occasion for borrowed finery ; and that the force of the satire depends upon that circumstance, of which Persius does not lose sight for a moment. But Dryden was negligent, not ignorant.

Casaubon strangely understands *pallidus* by *albus*. What could he see in the complacent and self-sufficient vanity of this hoary declaimer, to make him think for a moment of doubt and fear !

VER. 33. *With soft emollients, &c.*] It appears that Nero (Suet., Nero. 20.) prepared himself for public exhibition by a

His pliant throat with soft emollients clears,
 And deals insidious, round, his wanton leers :
 While Rome's first nobles, by the prelude wrought,
 Watch, with indecent glee, each prurient thought;
 And squeal with rapture, as the luscious line
 Thrills through the marrow, and inflames the chine.

Gray-bearded trifler! Canst thou stoop to please,
 By pand'ring to such itching fools as these?
 Fools, whose applause still shoots beyond thy aim,
 And dyes thy cheek, bronzed as it is, with shame!

long and severe course of discipline. He lay night after night with a sheet of lead upon his breast, took strong drastics, &c. &c. —therefore, say the criticks, he is introduced by Persius gargling his throat! What words can fully characterise these absurdities? Can any sensible person discover the slightest resemblance between this young aspirant and the old man (*vetulus*) of the text? between the effeminate affectation here ridiculed, and the violent and sustained discipline of Nero? Besides, it was not for a private recitation that this incomparable prince took such pains, but for a public appearance on the Neapolitan stage: recitation was *far beneath his daring*; it was by singing that he aspired to immortality; and, more to the delight of posterity, than of those who witnessed his *silver sounds*, perhaps, in some measure, succeeded.

VER. 40. ———*such itching fools*] It is *ears* in the original; but this connects so ill with what follows, that a tedious circumlocution alone could render it intelligible to the English reader. The Italians, however, venture upon it in their kindred tongue:

All' orecchie di tai, ch' uopo t' è loro,

Benchè sfrentato, gridar—basta!

Cute perditus is variously rendered by the translators. Holyday translates it “a skin-peeled ass,” Burton, “a wrinkled coun-

“ Quo didicisse, nisi hoc fermentum, et quæ
semel intus

Innata est, rupto jecore exierit caprificus ?”

En pallor, seniumque ! o mores ! usque adeone

Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter ?

“ At pulchrum est digito monstrari, et dicier,
hic est.

Ten' cirratorum centum dictata fuisse

tenance,” and Sheridan, (to my surprise) “ over-exertion, or fatigue:” it is, however, a common expression, and means nothing more than unblushing, lost to shame, &c.

VER. 44-5. *If thus the leaven—if the wild fig-tree, &c.]* These are harsh and incongruous metaphors to be brought together ; they are however, each in its way, marked and expressive. The French translators dare not, I perceive, venture upon them even in prose ; and the mode in which their poets escape from them can hardly be said to evince much ingenuity. This is M. Raoul's version :

— “ plus puissant que le lierre

“ Qui mine lentement et brise enfin la pierre.”

A more luckless substitution could not easily have been devised, for the ivy acts wholly from without. This gentleman (who wrote under Buonaparté's government) has discovered, that nothing is so well adapted to encourage talents, and diffuse a taste for letters, as public recitation : “ On le voit bien (he adds) par les Athenées de Paris, et des Departemens.” Of the Departments, it may be hazardous to speak ; but of the public readings of the metropolis, I will take upon me to affirm, that nothing more truly ridiculous was ever witnessed in the worst days of Rome : indeed it was scarcely possible to look at either actor or audience without recurring immediately to the scene before us.—But they were to the imperial taste ; and their good consequences followed of course—pretty much as they did at Rome.

VER. 50. *And is thy knowledge nothing, &c.]* This is from Lucilius, and as mellifluous as usual :

“ But wherefore have I learn’d ? if, thus repress,
The leaven still must swell within my breast !—
If the wild fig-tree, deeply rooted there,
Must never burst its cell, and shoot in air !”

Are these the fruits of study ! these, of age !
O times of shame ! O manners !—Foolish sage,
Is science only useful as ’tis shown ?
And is thy knowledge nothing, if not known ?

“ But, sure, ’tis pleasant, as we walk, to see
The pointed hand, and hear the loud *That’s He !*
On every side :—And seems it, in your sight,
So poor a trifle, that whate’er we write,
Is introduced—to every school of note,
And taught the youth of quality, by rote ?”

“ Id me

“ Nolo scire mihi cujus sum consciu’ solus ;

“ Ne damnum faciam. Scire est nescire, nisi id me

“ Scire alius sciret.”

VER. 51. “ *But sure ’tis pleasant, &c.] At pulcrum est digito monstrari.* Casaubon has given a pretty long list of our author’s “ Imitations of Horace,” in which this line is included : the passage imitated was, it seems—*at suave est magno tollere acervo !* Persius, indeed, keeps Horace so constantly in view, and follows him so closely, that it is sometimes difficult to persuade ourselves that we are not reading the earlier bard ; but the genius of Fluellin must have been at Casaubon’s elbow, when he pitched upon this notable proof of similarity. The old Scholiast had made a far happier hit long before, and referred to the real object of imitation :

“ Totum muneris hoc tui est,

“ Quod monstror digito prætereuntium.

Pro nihilo pendas?" Ecce, inter pocula quærunt
 Romulidæ satori, quid dia poemata narrent.
 Hic aliquis, cui circum humeros hyacinthina læna
 est,

Rancidulum quiddam balba de nare locutus,
 Phyllidas, Hypsipylas, vatum et plorabile si quid,
 Eliquat, et tenero supplantat verba palato.
 Assensere viri: nunc non cinis ille poetæ
 Felix? non levior cippus nunc imprimit ossa?
 Laudant convivæ: nunc non e manibus illis,
 Nunc non e tumulto, fortunataque favilla
 Nascentur violæ? "Rides, (ait,) et nimis uncis
 Naribus indulges: an erit, qui velle recuset
 Os populi meruisse? et cedro digna locutus,

VER. 57. — *Nay, more! Our nobles, &c.]* Here Persius (weary of his impertinence,) interrupts the apologist of the modern taste, and turns his plea into ridicule by extending it.—The latter dwells on the felicity of being read in schools by the children of the nobility;—"brave lads (as Holyday calls them,) with curled locks of gold." This is nothing, the poet sarcastically subjoins; they are read, at table, by the nobility themselves; and he proceeds to overwhelm them, together with their tales, with all the contempt of which his nature was capable, which, to confess the truth, was not a little. Of the two heroines of these "divine poems," Phillis hung herself in a fit of impatience at the long protracted absence of her husband; and Hypsipyle, after running through more love adventures than any lady of romance, narrowly escaped the same or a worse catastrophe.

It is the disastrous completion of these amorous tales, which recommends them to the soft and tender-hearted nobility of

—Nay, more! Our nobles, gorged, and ~~swill'd~~
with wine,

Call, o'er the banquet, for a lay divine.

Here one, on whom the princely purple glows,

Snuffles some musty legend through his nose;

Slowly distils Hypsipyle's sad fate,

And love-lorn Phillis, dying for her mate,

With what of woeful else, is said, or sung;

And trips up every word, with lispings tongue.

The maudlin audience, from the couches round,

Hum their assent, responsive to the sound.—

And are not now, the poet's ashes blest!

Lies not the turf now lightly on his breast!

They pause a moment—and again, the room

Rings with his praise: Now will not roses bloom,

Now, from his reliques, will not violets spring,

And o'er his hallow'd urn their fragrance fling!

“You laugh, ('tis answer'd,) and too freely here,

Indulge that vile propensity to sneer.

Lives there, who would not at applause rejoice,

And merit, if he could, the publick voice?

Who would not leave posterity such rhymes,

As cedar oil might keep to latest times;

Rome: the reciter seems to have adapted his tones to the melancholy nature of his subject; and every term used by Persius expresses mawkish softness, and ludicrous solemnity.

VER. 78. *As cedar oil might keep, &c.*] Vitruvius, with whom

Linquere nec scombros metuentia carmina, nec
thus?"

Quisquis es, o modo quem ex adverso dicere feci,
Non ego, cum scribo, si forte quid aptius exit,—
Quando hæc rara avis est,—si quid tamen aptius
exit,

Laudari metuam; neque enim mihi cornea fibra est.
Sed recti finemque extremumque esse recuso
EUGE tuum, et BELLE; nam BELLE hoc excute
totum;

Quid non intus habet? Non hic est Ilias Acci
Ebria veratro? non, si qua elegidia crudi
Dictârunt procures? non, quicquid denique lectis
Scribitur in citreis?—Calidum scis ponere sumen;

Pliny agrees, tells us that books and other substances rubbed with exudations from the cedar, are safe from moths and rotteness. The ancients appear to have kept their books, or rather rolls, in what we call pigeon holes, and occasionally in close chests: these, on account of the antiseptick quality of the wood, were usually made of the cedar tree; at least, for the more valuable portion of the collection: and to this, perhaps, the poet alludes—*cedro digna*, is therefore equivalent to "worthy of immortality." The proposal of such a shrine for the deplorable ditties of this noble coterie, is so absurd, that Persius appears to feel some compunction at starting it; and for the first and last time, in these Satires, condescends to apologize to his imaginary opponent for the outrageous folly in which he has gratuitously involved him.

VER. 92. *On Labeo's Iliad, drunk with hellebore,*] *Ilias Acci Ebria veratro.*—Some of the translators suppose this to be the tragedian Accius; but he appears, in his proper place, in a sub-

Rhymes, which should fear no desperate grocer's
hand,

Nor fly, with fish and spices, through the land!"

Thou, my kind monitor, whoe'er thou art,
Whom I suppose to play the opponent's part,
Know—when I write, if chance some happier strain,
(And chance it needs must be,) rewards my pain,
Know, I can relish praise with genuine zest;
Not mine the torpid, mine th' unfeeling breast:
But that I merely toil for this acclaim,
And make these eulogies my end and aim,
I must not, cannot grant; for—sift them all—
Mark well their value, and on what they fall:
Are they not shower'd (to pass these trifles o'er)
On Labeo's Iliad, drunk with hellebore?
On princely love-lays drivell'd without thought,
And the crude trash on citron couches wrought?

sequent passage. The author is now speaking of flat and vapid productions, whereas those of the old dramatist were of a rugged and masculine cast. The pseudo-Cornutus, happily, assists us here. The person meant, he tells us, is Accius Labeo, the translator of Homer, p. 13. The scholiast roundly calls him an ass:—for an ass, however, he was not immodest; since he appears to have relied not so much on his natural talents for versification, as on the effects of hellebore; of which he unluckily took too strong a dose.

What specific advantage was sought by the use of this *cursed hebenon*, does not appear. On some constitutions it might operate like opium on the people of the east, and produce a temporary derangement, during which the inspired wretch (like Accius) might

Scis comitem horridulum trita donare lacerna ;
 Et, verum, inquis, amo ; verum mihi dicite de me.
 Quî pote ? vis dicam ? nugaris, cum tibi, calve,

see, and hear, and speak ineffable things !—Pliny tells us, that though formerly very terrible, the drug was, in his time, so far deprived of its deadly quality, as to be in pretty general use by such as wished to sharpen their wits, and to see what they were about. He should have set down the recipe ; for it is again become a perilous medicine, and merely enables those who apply to it, to see their way out of the world. One of the continental criticks illustrates the passage by the practice of Dryden, who, as he says, “ *avoit coutume de prendre médecine, quand il vouloit composer pour le théâtre.*”

VER. 95. *You spread the table, &c.*] This is not much unlike a little piece of humour in the Anthology :

Ποιήης παναριστος αληθως εστιν εκειν
 ‘Οσις δειπνίζει της ακροασαμενης
 ‘Ην δ’ αναγινωσκη, και νησιας οικαδε πεμπη,
 Εις αυλον τραπετω την ιδιην μανην.

Martial was not likely to let the thought escape him :

“ Quod tam grande sophos clamat tibi turba togata :
 “ Non tu, Pomponi, cœna diserta tua est.”

VER. 99. *Tell me, you cry,—&c.*] From Plautus: *Ego verum amo, verum volo mihi dici, &c.* Our poet was little scrupulous in the article of conveying, as the wise call it: this, however, seems less the effect of poverty, than of a youthful passion for shewing the extent of his reading, and of a natural and prompt alacrity, which he found in parody.

The criticks, who see Nero in every page, have, as they think, caught a glimpse of him here—

“ cum tibi, calve,
 “ Pinguis aqualiculus propenso sesquipede exstet.”

The “ pinguis aqualiculus” does, indeed, fit him ; or, rather,

You spread the table,—'tis a master-stroke,—
 And give the shivering guest a thread-bare cloke;
 Then, while his heart with gratitude dilates,
 At the glad vest, and the delicious cates,
 Tell me, you cry,—for truth is my delight,
 What says the Town of me, and what I write?
 He cannot :—he has neither ears nor eyes.
 But shall I tell you, who your bribes despise ?

did fit him at a subsequent period ; for it is always carefully forgotten that Nero was at this time a very young man. His projecting belly is noticed by Suetonius ; (Nero, § 51.) but he was not then, or at any time of his life, *bald* ; on the contrary, he had, like sir Andrew Aguecheek, *an excellent head of hair*, on which, in fact, he prided himself not a little ; and Seneca, the most skilful of flatterers, does not forget to compliment him on it :

“ talem jam Roma Neronem

“ Aspiciet ; flagrat nitidus fulgore remisso

“ Vultus, et effuso cervix formosa capillo.”

I think, with sir W. Drummond, that Persius simply “ alludes to those bloated habits incurred by indolence and gluttony.” Holyday kindles into wrath in this place, and utters very scurrilous speeches :

———— “ Wilt let me speak ?

“ Thou triflest, bald-pate ass ! and thy skill's weak,

“ Seeing a flat hogge-trough-paunch before thee struts,

“ Full eighteen inches with a load of guts.”

Dryden is still more coarse, and rude. I have given the literal sense of the words ; their general import, perhaps, may be more correctly expressed in this way :

Dotard ! this thriftless trade no more pursue ;

Your lines are bald and dropsical, like you.

Pinguis aqualiculus propenso sesquipede exstet !

O Jane ! a tergo quem nulla ciconia pinsit,
Nec manus auriculas imitata est mobilis albas,
Nec linguæ, quantum sitiât canis Appula, tantum.
Vos, o patricius sanguis, quos vivere fas est
Occipiti cæco, posticæ occurrите sannæ !

“ Quis populi sermo est ? ” Quis enim, nisi car-
mina molli

Nunc demum numero fluere, ut per lève severos

VER. 105. Here the poet (as is not unusual with him) interrupts the dramatic progress of his satire, for the sake of introducing a pertinent, and, to say the truth, a very pleasant apostrophe to Janus, whom he felicitates upon the singularity of his conformation :

“ looking before and after

“ With godlike capability.”

“ By Janus (Burton says) we are to understand Nero” ! Always Nero ?—*Mungo here, Mungo dere, Mungo every where.* This commentator seems to have been worse dealt with than the *patricius sanguis*, whose hard lot is here so pathetically described : they only wanted eyes behind ; but he cannot even see before him !

The Romans were great adepts in the various arts of expressing contempt, and they appear to have bequeathed no small portion of their ingenuity to their descendants, the modern Italians. I have frequently seen them follow an unfortunate wight *occipiti cæco*, and ridicule him with the most expressive and ludicrous signs. The “ ass’s ears,” and “ the stork’s bill,” are still the popular modes of scoffing : these, the suppleness of their fingers enables them to imitate with great success ; but the manner of it must be seen to be fully understood.”

St. Jerome is said, in the Legends, to have been scourged by

—Bald trifier ! cease at once your thriftless trade ;
That mountain paunch, for verse was never made.

O Janus, happiest of thy happy kind !—
No waggish stork can peck at thee behind ;
No tongue thrust forth, expose to passing jeers ;
No twinkling fingers, perk'd like ass's ears,
Point to the vulgar mirth :—but you, ye Great,
Doom'd, to an eyeless occiput, by fate,
Prevent, while yet you may, the rabble's glee,
And tremble at the scoff you cannot see !—

“What says the Town ?”—Precisely what it
ought :

All you produce, sir, with such skill is wrought,

the fiends for following Cicero too closely. Perhaps these ancient reviewers had no taste for the flowing style ; otherwise, as far as mere closeness is concerned, they might, with more justice, have punished him for copying Persius. The following passage, taken from the lines before us, occurs in his letter to the monk, Rusticus : *Ne credas laudatoribus tuis : imo irrisoribus aurem ne libenter accomodes, qui cum te adulationibus foverint,—si subito respexeris, aut ciconiarum deprehendes post te colla curvari ; aut manu auriculas agitari asini, aut æstuantis canis pertendi linguam.* This (and the Italian criticks, who are familiar with his works, abound in similar instances) may tend to prove that St. Jerome not only read our poet, but understood him ; in spite of the idle tale, to which I have already alluded.

VER. 113. “*What says the Town ?*” &c.] Persius now returns to the great man's table, and gives the answer which his *petulant spleen* had intercepted. After expressing their unqualified approbation to their host, in those mechanical terms which seem now to have been naturalized in fashionable society, the guests

Effundat junctura ungues?—scit tendere versum
 Non secus, ac si oculo rubricam dirigat uno:
 Sive opus in mores, in luxum, in prandia regum
 Dicere, res grandes nostro dat Musa poetæ!

Ecce, modo heroas sensus afferre videmus
 Nugari solitos Græce, nec ponere lucum

are humorously supposed to turn round, and discuss his surprising merits among themselves. "Whate'er the subject," &c. The lively march of this Satire is worthy of all praise.

Dryden's version of this passage, *Quis populi sermo est?*—is so singular, as to excite the surprise of some of the French critics, who are, in general, well affected towards his translation, the only English one with which they appear to be acquainted,

"To pass the poets of patrician blood,

"What is't the common readers take for good?"

VER. 123. *Lo! striplings, scarcely from the ferule freed, &c.]* If the various parts of this Satire were intended to bear one upon another, the author might be conjectured to insinuate here that the extravagant and profligate praise so cheaply purchased, encouraged the young nobility not only to premature exertions of their talents, but to subjects for which they were utterly unqualified. Casaubon, however, thinks that the allusion is to the preposterous mode of instruction then in vogue; and that the masters are rather aimed at than the scholars: but these rath-ripe geniuses had already quitted school—*manum ferulæ subduxerant*—and were become candidates for the palm of epick poetry. This learned commentator seems to have deceived himself by connecting the *nugari solitos Græce* of the text with a passage in Quintilian, who informs us that, in his time, boys began with Greek, a practice which he reprobates; *a sermone græco puerum inceptere male*. But *nugari græce* can never mean drudging through the accidence: it rather signifies wasting time in Greek composition; producing vile prose perhaps, or viler verse, in that language, on the trite themes of the sophists.

That o'er the polish'd surface, far and wide,
 The critick nail, without a jar, must glide :
 While every verse is drawn as straight and fine,
 As if one eye had fix'd the ruddled line.

—Whate'er the subject of his varied rhymes,
 The humours, passions, vices of the times ;
 The pomp of nobles, barbarous pride of kings,
 All, all is great ! and all inspired he sings !

Lo ! striplings, scarcely from the ferule freed,
 And smarting yet from Greek, with headlong speed,

It has not escaped Casaubon, in this place, that there is a wonderful resemblance between the language of Persius and Petronius. The remark is strictly just ; and it may tend to corroborate an opinion elsewhere hazarded, that some injury has been done to our poet, by understanding his metaphorical expressions in a literal sense.

With respect to the passage above, it is, like many others in Persius, “ sealed ” to us. The want of contemporary scholia has robbed him of much appropriate praise ; for there cannot be a doubt that he here parodies and plays upon some favourite of the town. The poem, thus ridiculed, appears to have been a sort of *Rhapsody on the Golden Age*, or the *Delights of the Country*, turgid in its language, mean in its objects, and rambling and incoherent in its plan. Such as it was, however, its reception was sufficiently flattering to encourage a bolder attempt. Of this, we merely learn that it was an epick poem—*heroas sensus afferre videmus*.

The festival of Pales (verse 130) was celebrated by the rustics on the eleventh of the calends of May, (April 21,) the anniversary, as Propertius says, of the foundation of Rome, with many antic feats of boisterous exertion, one of which was leaping, or

Artifices, nec rus saturum laudare, ubi corbes,
 Et focus, et porci, et fumosa Palilia fœno :
 Unde Remus, sulcoque terens dentalia, Quinti !
 Quum trepida ante boves Dictatorem induit uxor ;
 Et tua aratra domum lictor tulit.—Euge, poëta !

Est nunc, Brisæi quem venosus liber Acci,
 Sunt, quos Pacuviusque, et verrucosa moretur
 Antiopa, ærumnis cor luctificabile fulta.

rather hopping over a succession of stubble-heaps previously set on fire.

“ Moxque per ardentes stipulæ crepitantis acervos
 “ Trajicies celeri strenua membra pede.”

It appears from Varro that the amusement had something of superstition in it, even in his time, and that the country people attributed an expiatory power to the fire through which they passed : a notion, of which the origin is lost in the darkness of time, and perhaps coeval with the first falling into idolatry.

VER. 132. *Quinctius*, &c.] The story of *Quinctius Cincinnatus* is known to every school boy. That part of it to which *Persius* alludes, is very prettily told by *Livy* in his third book.

VER. 137: *There are, who hunt out*, &c.] The literary taste of the Roman people seems not to have improved as rapidly as some of their best writers desired. Though furnished with correcter models, they continued to look back with fondness to the early specimens of art ; and the obstinacy of their attachment to the writings of *Pacuvius*, *Accius*, *Lucilius*, &c. furnished the critics of the Augustan age with perpetual subjects of complaint. The fretfulness of *Horace* on this subject has been already noticed. His querulous remonstrances, however, had no effect :—and, after a lapse of three-score years, the same complaint is reproduced in stronger language. But the warmth of our author is better founded than that of his predecessor. It is not of their general merits that *Persius* speaks in this place ; for of these

Rush on heroicks ; though devoid of skill
 To paint the rustling grove, or purling rill ;
 Or praise the country, robed in cheerful green,
 Where hogs, and hearths, and ozier frails are seen,
 And happy hinds, who leap o'er smouldering hay,
 In honour, Pales, of thy sacred day.

—*Scenes of delight !—there Remus lived, and there,
 In grassy furrows, Quinctius tired his share ;
 Quinctius, on whom his wife, with trembling haste,
 The dictatorial robes exulting, placed,
 Beside his team ; while homeward, with his plough,
 The lictors hurried—Good ! a HOMER thou !*

There are, who hunt out antiquated lore,
 And never, but on musty authors, pore ;
 These, Accius' jagg'd and knotty lines engage,
 And those, Pacuvius' hard and horny page ;
 Where, in quaint tropes, Antiopa is seen
 To——*prop her dolorifick heart with teen !*

he probably thought pretty much like his contemporaries ; but of their defects, which the fashion of the day recommended to imitation A corrupt age is always an affected one. Simplicity is lost in silliness ; and vigour in gigantick tumour : the rude and obsolete terms of the old dramatists were sedulously culled to gratify a morbid taste, a sickly delicacy which had no relish of nature, and to the indulgence of which the poet justly attributes the corruption of forensick eloquence, and the debility of metrical composition.

The following passage on this subject, from one of the old grammarians, is highly curious. Quid (says Diomede, treating of his own times,) “ *Quid quod nihil jam proprium placet, dum*

Hos pueris monitus patres infundere lippos
 Cum videas, quærisne unde hæc sartago loquendi
 Venerit in linguas? unde istud dedecus, in quo
 Trossulus exultat tibi per subsellia lêvis?

Nilne pudet, capiti non posse pericula cano
 Pellere, quin tepidum hoc optes audire? DECEN-
 TER!

parum creditur disertum quod alius dixerit? A corruptissimo quôque poetarum figuras seu translationes mutuamur, tum demum ingeniosi, si ad intelligendos nos, opus sit ingenio!"

The Accius mentioned by Persius, (for there were several of the name,) was a tragick writer of considerable celebrity. His general style appears to have been uncouth but vigorous: dark, rugged, and sublime. All his tragedies were not like *Briseis*,* which was probably strongly marked by his characteristick defects, and therefore selected as a model for the rising generation! One specimen of the tortuous bombast of this poet may amuse the reader.

"Indecorabiliter alienos alunt,

"Ut rorulentas terras ferro fidas proscindant glebas."

Pacuvius, who preceded Accius many years, was yet more eminent. His tragedies were long the delight of the Roman stage. Cicero speaks with commendation of his *Orestes*, though he does not overlook its defects. Of *Antiopa*, all that remains, perhaps, is the fragment in the text—*arumnis cor luctificabile fulta*—which, to say the truth, has a suspicious appearance, and is, not improbably, somewhat unfairly quoted by our poet.

The metaphor, which is so forced and unnatural as to obscure the meaning, is thus explained, *Vulg.*

* Written, perhaps, on the same subject as the *Bacchæ* of Euripides. Persius calls the poet *Brisean Accius*, so that he might be familiarly mentioned by this piece, which was probably esteemed his best.

O, when you mark the sire, to judgment blind,
Commend such models to the infant mind,
Forbear to wonder whence this oglio sprung,
This sputtering jargon which infests our tongue;
This scandal of the times, which shocks my ear,
And which our knights bound from their seats to
hear!

How monstrous seems it that we cannot plead,
When call'd to answer for some felon deed;
Nor danger from the trembling head repel,
Without a sigh for—*Bravo! Vastly well!*

“ Whose woeful heart was nourished with grief,
“ The depth of sorrow yielding some relief;”

which, though it defeats the object of the satire, is, at least, intelligible, and not much unlike the language of Shakspeare's lady Constance, who, as well as Antiopa, renounced the consolations of hope, to gather resolution from despair.

But Persius not only laughs at the quaintness, but at the antiquated barbarisms of this unfortunate verse. *Luctificabile*, I believe, must be given up; and Quintilian (who thought on this subject very much like our author, and that the copiers of the obsolete language of Ennius did not always understand the terms which they borrowed from him), seems to justify the censure of *ærumna*, which was then grown obsolete. What need is there, he says, of this word when we have *labor*? There is no disputing with Quintilian on such a subject; but *labor* must have lost, or *ærumna* gained considerably since his time, if we understand the two words correctly at present. Finally, though a profuse and indiscriminate introduction of obsolete terms is not to be commended, a sparing and judicious use of them has its advantages; and, at all events, a language is not much the worse for possessing two words with nearly the same meaning.

Fur es, ait Pedio. Pedius quid? crimina rasis
 Librat in antithetis, doctus posuisse figuras.
 Laudatur; *bellum* hoc! hoc *bellum*? an Romule
 ceves?

Men' moveat quippe et, cantet si naufragus,
 assem

Protulerim? Cantas, cum fracta te in trabe pictum
 Ex humero portes?—verum, nec nocte paratum
 Plorabit, qui me volet incurvasse querela.

Sed numeris decor est, et junctura addita crudis.
 Claudere sic versum didicit,—*Berecynthus Attin*,
 Et, *qui cœruleum dirimebat Nerea delphin*—

VER. 153. *This Pedius, &c.*] The poet alludes to Pedius Blæsus, who was accused of peculation and extortion in his government: and who, instead of defending himself, (as the old commentators say,) by adducing proofs of his innocence, strove to captivate the benevolence of Nero by scraps of poetry interlarded with rhetorical flourishes. If we substitute “the Court” or “the Bench” for Nero, the observation will not be much amiss.—It may be added, that Pedius lost his pains: he was found guilty, and expelled the Senate.

VER. 163. *When in that tablet, &c.*] See Juv. vol. ii. p. 176.

Ver. 173. *Blue Nereus here, &c.*] This must look like mere jargon to the unlearned reader; who may, if he thinks fit, console himself with the assurance that it does not appear much otherwise to the learned one. The specific object is still a secret, which no translation will aid us to discover. The passage, whether doggedly turned, as it is by Holyday, or burlesqued, as it is by Brewster, is equally obscure: and the four lines which I have placed in the text, aspire to nothing beyond filling up a blank in the page.

This Pedius is a thief, the accusers cry.
 You hear them, Pedius? Now, for your reply.—
 In terse antitheses he weighs the crime,
 Equals the pause, and balances the chime;
 And with such skill his flowery tropes employs,
 That the rapt audience scarce contain their joys.
O charming! charming! he must, sure, prevail!
This, charming! Can a Roman wag the tail?

Were the wreck'd mariner to chaunt his woe,
 Should I, or sympathy, or alms bestow?
 "Sing you, when, in that tablet on your breast,
 I see your story to the life exprest;
 A shatter'd bark, dash'd madly on the shore,
 And you, scarce floating, on a broken oar?"—
 No! he must feel that would my pity share,
 And drop a natural, not a studied tear.

"But yet, our numbers boast a grace unknown
 To our rough sires, a smoothness all our own."

True: the spruce metre in sweet cadence flows,
 And answering sounds a tuneful chime compose:
 Blue Nereus here the dolphin cuts amain,
 There Berecynthian Attin swells the strain;

The *decor* and the *junction* claimed by the defender of the modern system, are scarcely visible to our eyes; but this is not the fault of Persius. *Berecynthius Atys* was probably an affected innovation; in any case, there appears an over-refinement in the melting modulation of the two words. The next quotation

Sic, *costam longo subduximus Apennino.*

“ARMA VIRUM,—Nonne hoc spumosum et cortice pingui?”

Ut ramale vetus prægrandi subere coctum.

Quidnam igitur tenerum, et laxa cervice legendum?

Torva Mimalloneis implérunt cornua bombis,

ceruleum dirimebat Nerea delphin, was probably censured for other faults. It has, indeed, an effeminate flow, a superabundance of mutes and liquids: but it seems more reprehensible for its mixed metaphors, its inflated and ænigmatical enunciation of a simple idea. The old scholiast tells us that the poet laughs at the jangling terminations, *Attin* and *Delphin*; his copy, therefore, differed from ours; and though I have *no exquisite reason* for it, I have adopted his reading.

The remaining line—*costam longo subduximus Apennino*—possesses every fault, that is to say, every excellence, which the taste of the day could give: and was probably regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of poetick art: being quaint, obscure, tumid, affected, and emasculate. It is probably taken from some heroic poem on the final expulsion of Hannibal from Italy. *Subducere costam* is variously translated; to withdraw—to cleave—to carve out—It matters not greatly how such language is rendered; but *subducere* is a military term, and means to surprise and preoccupy a position by forced or stolen marches. A similar expression is used by Xenophon “*κλεπῶν τῆς οδοῦς*,” and some pleasantry passes on the occasion between him and the Spartan, Chersiphilus, on the relative dexterity of their countrymen in stealing; in which the latter has all the advantage of what old Fuller calls “the wit-combat.” *Anab. lib. iv.*

The passage is thus explained by Madan, “for the use of young beginners.” “He calls (says he) Hannibal’s opening a way across the Alps, removing a rib from the Apennine!”

And, happier yet, here taste and skill combine,
 'To win the chine of the long Apennine !

“ *Arms and the man*—Here, too, perhaps, you
 find,

A pithless branch beneath a fungous rind ?”

Not so ;—a season'd trunk of many a day,
 Whose gross and watery parts are purg'd away.

But what, in fine, (for still you jeer me,) call
 For the moist eye, bow'd head, and lengthen'd drawl,
 What strains of genuine pathos ?

——*O'er the hill*

The dismal slug horn sounded, loud and shrill,

VER. 177. *Arms and the man*——] From the petulance of the retort, it would appear that the patience of the advocate of the modern style of poetry, was nearly exhausted by this successful ridicule. If this be pompous and overstrained, he says, what think you of Virgil's *Arma virumque*, &c. ? Is not that also a spungy rind without pith or strength ? Persius takes up the far-fetched metaphor, and, in the bitterness of mockery, adopting his opponent's own phraseology, answers—that, although the bark might be turgid and corky, it had firm and well-seasoned timber under it.

It may not be amiss to add, that a depreciation of the standard poetry is, in every country, one of the most striking signs of a decay of taste ; and that it is usually accompanied, as here, by a passion for the crude and imperfect productions of an earlier age. “ There is more in this than nature was ever conduct of, if philosophy could find it out.”

VER. 183. *O'er the hill*, &c.] Persius pursues his triumph ; and produces, as a specimen of the *tender and delicate*, a passage from some fashionable lay on the story of Agave. “ Dio tells us (says Sheridan) that Nero wrote a tragedy on the Bacchæ ;

*Et raptum vitulo caput ablatura superbo
Bassaris, et lyncem Mænas flexura corymbis
Evion ingeminat : reparabilis adsonat Echo.*

Hæc fierent, si testiculi vena ulla paterni
Viveret in nobis ? Summa delumbe saliva
Hoc natat in labris, et in udo est Mænas, et Attin ;
Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues.
“ Sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero

from which this was probably taken.” But, in the first place, Dio tells no such thing :—he says, indeed, that Nero attempted to sing, or rather squall, some part in a tragedy of that name, but drops not a hint that he wrote it ;—and, in the next place, if he had, Sheridan ought to have known that these lines could not be taken from it, since there is no instance of an hexameter tragedy in the age of Nero. The poem is evidently founded on the Bacchæ of Euripides, from which many of the expressions are closely copied.

— Αἱ δὲ νεμομεναις χλοῇν
Μουσχοῖς ἐπὶ λθον χεῖρ' αἰσίδηρα μετα,
Και τὴν μὲν ἀν' προσεῖδες εὐδηλὸν πορὶν
Μυκωμένην ἐχυσαν ἐν χεῖροιν δικά. κ. τ. α.

This justifies, in some measure, the introduction of—*vitulo caput ablatura superbo* : yet it would seem, after all, that our poet had, with malice prepense, introduced a little of his own, and for the sake of increasing the ridicule, inserted *vitulo* in the place of *tauro*, or rather *cervo*, which was probably the author's word.

The opening of this burlesque seems parodied from Catullus,

Multi raucisonis implebant cornua bombis,

unless we suppose that this unfortunate line had subsequently been employed by some absurd copyist. It is not ill observed, however, by M. Raoul, that had it been found among Nero's

*A Mimallonian blast : fired at the sound,
In maddening groupes the Bacchants pour around ;
Mangle the haughty calf with gory hands,
And scourge the indocile lynx with ivy wands ;
While Echo lengthens out the barbarous yell,
And propagates the din from cell to cell !*

O were not every spark of manly sense,
Of pristine vigour, quench'd or banish'd hence,
Could this be borne ! this cuckoo-spit of Rome,
Which gathers round the lips in froth and foam
—The *haughty calf*, and *Attin's* jangling strain,
Dropt, without effort, from the rheumy brain :
No savour they of bleeding nails afford,
Or desk,—oft smitten for the happy word.

“ But why must you, alone, displeased appear,
And with harsh truths thus grate the tender ear ?

works, it would have proved beyond question, that the satire was pointed at him. It may be added that, if the commentator had looked a little further into the charming poem of the Epithalamion of Peleus, from which it is taken, he would have found not a few traces of that delicious languor which seems so little to the taste of Persius.

The pseudo-Cornutus, who, as usual, gives the honour of these exploded lines to Nero, adds, that their defects are an over-affected delicacy of modulation, and a perpetual labouring after similar sounds. Persius probably saw all this, and more, in them, to blame ; but we cannot at this late period follow him ; and fortunately the matter is of no great moment.

VER. 199. *But why, &c.*] It would seem as if the poet's antagonist had discovered at length, that all his arguments in

Auriculas ? videsis, ne majorum tibi forte
 Limina frigescant : sonat heic de nare canina
 Littera." Per me equidem sint omnia protinus
 alba ;
 Nil moror ; euge, omnes, omnes bene miræ eritis
 res !

favour of the reigning taste, only served to bring upon it an increasing weight of ridicule : he therefore changes his battery, and endeavours to deter the author from pursuing his satire by laying before him the contempt and even peril to which it exposed him.

Or shall we say (for no raree-show man shifts his figures quicker than Persius does his Fantoccini) that the friend, who interrupted him at first, and who seems to have listened with exemplary patience to a succession of new speakers, again steps forth, resumes the cautious counsel which broke off at *Nolo*, and enforces it, by stating his fears in stronger language ? The decision is not material. It is of more consequence to observe that the author still affects the disguise which he put on at first, and reckons, among the chief objects of alarm, the displeasure of the rich, and the consequent expulsion from their tables.

Casaubon seems to refer the growling in the next line—*sonat heic de nare canina Littera*—to the houses of the great ; and Holyday has translated it, in this sense, with considerable humour—

“ Methinks they’re touched already, and I hear

“ The doggish letter R sound in my ear.”

But the meaning is evidently that which is given in the text. If the reader wishes to know why R is the “ doggish letter,” or, as it is more correctly translated by Juliet’s nurse, the “ dog’s letter,” Lucilius, in a line which a dog almost might have written, will fully inform him :

“ Irritata canis quod homo quam planius dicit.”

O yet beware ! think of the closing gate,
 And dread the cold reception of the great !
 This currish humour you extend too far,
 While every word growls with that hateful gnarr."

Right ! From this hour, (for now my fault I
 see,)

All shall be charming !—charming all ! for me .

or—for it is read, as Ophelia says, *with a difference*:

" Irritata canis, quod r. r. quam plurima dicet."

" The most voluminous edition of Persius," says M. Sinner, " and, at the same time, the least known (what a pity !) is that of Henry Scalesius, of the order of preaching, (qu. prosing ?) Friars, published at Naples, 1690, in three huge volumes of five hundred pages each. On the expression before us, *sonat heic de nare*, the editor launches into a long anatomical description of the structure of different *noses* !

VER. 205. *Right ! From this hour, &c.*] M. Sélis is in raptures with Boileau's happy imitation of this passage :

" Puisque vous le voulez, je vais changer de style.

" Je le déclare donc, Quinault est un Virgile :

" Pradon comme un Soleil en nos ans a paru,

" Pelletier écrit mieux qu'Ablancourt ni Patru," &c.

These lines are poor enough :—poor as they are, however, they apparently caught the fancy of Pope, who has closely followed them ; and, as well as his predecessor, is praised by Dr. Warton for the neatness and dexterity of his satire. Pope's lines are——

" Blunt could do business, &c.

" Is this too little ? Come then, I'll comply.

" Spirit of Arnall ! aid me while I lie.

" Cobham's a coward, Polworth is a slave,

" And Lyttelton a dark designing knave."

I see nothing to admire here. Persius is composed and grave

Hoc juvat: *heic*, inquis, *veto quisquam faxit oletum*.
 Pingue duos angues. Pueri, sacer est locus; extra
 Meiite! Discedo.—Secuit Lucilius urbem,
 Te, Lupe! te, Muti! et genuinum fregit in illis.
 Omne vafer vitium ridenti Flaccus amico
 Tangit, et admissus circum præcordia ludit,
 Callidus excusso populum suspendere naso.

throughout, and this has a good effect; while Boileau and Pope set about their irony with a parade that at once defeats their purpose. Instead of the dry and quiet humour of the original, we have in the imitations, the conceited prologue of a show-man. "Now, ladies and gentlemen, please to attend, for I am going to be very comical." *Spirit of Arnall*, &c. is exceedingly bad; for we do not want to know how the poet can "lie," but how ingeniously he can mask his purpose, and convey satire under the form of praise.

VER. 211. *Paint then two snakes entwined.*] To signify that the place was consecrated to some local divinity, and therefore not to be polluted. Sir W. Drummond quotes here an apposite passage from Laurentius. *Veteres Gentiles serpentes appinxere ad conciliandam loco sacro reverentiam, quos mystæ suos genios interpretabantur, quemadmodum Christiani crucem appingunt.* Servius, too, says that every place had its genius, who was generally represented under the figure of a snake. Persius speaks of the circumstance as perfectly familiar; yet it is very rarely mentioned by the Roman critics. There is considerable humour in making the poet, after he has been warned away by the appearance of this sacred symbol, to linger as he retires, and finally turn back, to justify his right to remain by the examples of Lucilius and Horace.

In the beautiful character given of this last, there is a passage with which the critics have injudiciously tampered. Animals when enraged, curl or turn back the extremity of their noses:

What late seem'd base, already looks divine,
 And wonders start to view, in every line !
 'Tis well, you cry : “ this spot let none defile,
 Or turn to purposes obscene and vile.”
 Paint, then, two snakes entwined ; and write
 around,

URINE NOT, CHILDREN, HERE : 'TIS HOLY GROUND.

Aw'd, I retire :—and yet—when vice appear'd,
 Lucilius, o'er the town, his falchion rear'd ;
 On Lupus, Mutius, pour'd his rage by name,
 And broke his grinders on their bleeding fame.
 And yet—arch Horace, while he strove to mend,
 Probed all the foibles of his smiling friend ;
 Play'd lightly round and round the peccant part,
 And won, unfelt, an entrance to his heart :
 Well skill'd the follies of the crowd to trace,
 And sneer, with gay good humour in his face.

hence *nasus aduncus* came to signify scorn or anger ; hence too, the metaphorical expression *adunco suspendere naso*, to suspend on this curve, meant to hold up or expose to scorn. It was the peculiar talent of Horace to expose without manifesting the usual signs of ridicule. He shook every wrinkle out of his nose ; he gave it an appearance of perfect smoothness ; yet, with matchless dexterity, still continued to hold up to laughter the unsuspecting crowd—*excusso naso populum suspendit*. *Emuncto* and *exterso*, which Lubin and others would exchange for this happy expression, bear a very different meaning, and tend to prove that they did not comprehend its force.

M. Raoul is quite charmed with the expression of Monti ; and

Men' mutire nefas? nec clam, nec cum scrobe?

“Nusquam.”

Heic tamen infodiam. *Vidi, vidi ipse, libelle ;
Auriculas asini Mida rex habet. Hoc ego opertum,
Hoc ridere meum, tam nil, nulla tibi vendo
Iliade.*—Audaci quicunque afflate Cratino,
Iratum Eupolidem, prægrandi cum sene, palles,

seems to envy the Italian for admitting a close translation, which, he says truly, the French language will not,

Esperto

Nel sospender la gente al naso acuto.”

which is just the reverse of the poet's meaning, and proves that signior Monti understood the original no better than his admirer.

Who would have expected such an imitation of these poignant and tasteful lines from Boileau, as the following wretched quatrain exhibits?

“C'est ainsi que Lucile appuyé de Lelie,
Fit justice en son tems des Catins d'Italie,
Et qu' Horace jettant le sel à pleines mains,
Se jouait aux dépens de Pelletiers Romains.”

I doubt whether Boileau rightly understood the poet—he is almost always too coarse for him.

VER. 228. — *King Midas wear.*] The allusion, as every schoolboy knows, is to the story told of this foolish prince and his barber. (Met. lib. xi.) Perhaps there is nothing more trite in all the works of Ovid, yet the old Scholiast gravely tells us that the poet's preceptor, the learned Cornutus, proposed to divert the keen eye of Nero from discovering the fearful drift of the satire, by substituting *Quis non* for the name of his Phrygian majesty. “This precaution (says Sélis, after Bayle,) was exceedingly judicious: *Elle annonce de la part de Cornutus une grande connoissance du coeur humain*!”

And may not—must not I to whisper dare ?
 Not, to myself ?—a ditch ? “ Not any where.”
 Yes, *here* I'll dig ; *here*, to sure trust confide
 The secret, which I would, but cannot, hide.
 Take it, dear book ! “ O what a stately pair,
 Of ass's ears, I saw King Midas wear !”

This quip of mine, which none must, hear, or **know**,
 This fond conceit, which takes my fancy so,
 This nothing, if you will ; you shall not buy,
 With all those Iliads which you prize so high.

But thou, whom Eupolis' impassion'd page,
 Hostile to vice, inflames with kindred rage,

VER. 233. *But thou, whom Eupolis, &c.*] Of the three dramatick poets here mentioned, (the chief writers of the old comedy,) Cratinus was the first in point of time. He well merited the epithet (*audax*) which Persius has affixed to his name ; and indeed, carried this characteristick quality so far, that it was found necessary to restrain his personalities by a special edict. He lived to a very great age ; so that he must have found wine, to which he was much addicted, no less favourable to the longevity of the human species, than he did (according to Horace) to the duration of verse. Eupolis, who appeared some years after him, is distinguished by a still stronger epithet, (*iratus*) angry. His anger, however, was justified by the vices of his fellow citizens, and, generally speaking, seems to have been well directed. No personal considerations ever checked his reproof of the demagogues, to whose resentment, it is said, he finally fell a sacrifice ; being secretly thrown into the sea as he was passing the Hellespont. Of Aristophanes, nothing need be said here, except that some doubts have arisen as to the sense of the word *pragrandis*, by which the poet designates him. It

Aspice et hæc, si forte aliquid decoctius audis ;
Inde vaporata lector mihi ferveat aure.—

Non hic, qui in crepidas Graiorum ludere gestit,
Sordidus; et lusco qui possit dicere, Lusce ;

cannot mean age, for he was probably younger than either of the other two ; it cannot mean priority in time, for both of them were before him : yet Holyday calls him “ that old man,” and Madan “ that great old man.” I have supposed it to refer to the superior severity of his satire, at which even Cleon, and the minions of the people trembled.

The conclusion of this paragraph

——— “ si quid decoctius audis,
“ Inde vaporata lector mihi ferveat aure : ”

is not without its difficulties. Holyday, whom most of the translators follow, renders it thus :

“ If any thing more perfect thou shalt hear
“ Among my lines,—grow hot with a purged ear ; ”

but is it not rather an ear, i. e. a mind, (for Persius adopts the language of the Porch,) enkindled, and catching a sympathetick ardour from the inspiration of the poet ? If I rightly understand Sir W. Drummond, he must have taken it somewhat in the same sense : his version is elegant but paraphrastick :

“ Let them look here ; and if by chance they find
“ Men well described, or manners well design'd,
“ Let them acknowledge that my breast has known
“ Fires not less pure, less generous than their own.”

One observation may yet be made on this passage, which is so far important as it serves to account for the perpetual succession of new speakers in Persius. We here see his object. Horace professes to imitate Lucilius ; Juvenal does the same, in the most express terms : while our youthful poet took for his model the Old Comedy ; and therefore threw his Satires altogether into the dramattick form. Many reasons might be

Whom stern Cratinus, and that awful sire,
 Force, as thou read'st, to tremble and admire ;
 Come, view my humbler labours:—there, if aught,
 More highly finish'd, more maturely wrought,
 Detain thine ear, and give thy breast to glow,
 With warmth, responsive to the inspiring flow,
 I seek no further.—

Far from me the rest—
 Yes, far the wretch, who, with a low-born jest,
 Can twit the blind with—blindness ! and pursue,
 With vulgar ribaldry, the Grecian shoe :

alleged for this ; but as the real one might after all be overlooked, it is better not to indulge in conjecture. Vivacity and freedom he certainly secured by his choice ; and though his success might not be great, yet his ambition was not illaudable in striving to traverse a nobler field than that

“ Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus.”

VER. 243. *Can twit, &c.*] Here again we have Nero ! He wrote a satire, it appears, against one C. Pollio, which he called *Luscio* ; *argal*, say the criticks, it is clear that he must be the short-winded witling of the text. Now, whatever the nature of the poem may have been, we may be pretty confident that it did not *imitate the honourable Roman in brevity*, and confine its abuse to a single word : and how do we know that Pollio was blind ? or that the word (*Luscio*), in fact, signifies a blind man ? It may just as well signify an *amateur in musick*, a vocal performer, a character far more likely to provoke the imperial spleen than a blind man. But to be serious, the criticks are mad—stark, staring mad.—As if Nero was another Proteus, they seize upon every creature that appears in these pages, and more blind than Aristæus, cry out that they

Sese aliquem credens, Italo quod honore supinus
 Fregerit heminas Aretî ædilis iniquas :
 Nec qui abaco numeros, et secto in pulvere metas
 Scit risisse vafer ; multum gaudere paratus,
 Si Cynico barbam petulans Nonaria vellat.

have taken the god, when they have only a porpoise, or a polypus under their hands.

“ Cornutus and others of the old commentators,” says one of the last and, indeed, best of the continental translators, “ ont *froidement* interprété cet endroit, et font dire à Perse, qu’il ne veut pas pour lecteur un homme qui reproche aux autres les défauts du corps.” Alas, alas ! it is on this very *froideur* that the force of the satire depends. For the good or bad taste of the passage, the poet is undoubtedly answerable ; but we must not be wiser than our text.

VER. 244. ——— the Grecian shoe, &c.] Persius designates this people by the use of the *crepidæ*, a kind of slipper, still worn in the east. Perhaps it was a national distinction, and applied in opposition to the *calceus*, the wearing of which marked the Romans. The *abacus* (which, for want of a better name, I have called the “ numeral scale,”) was a slender frame of an oblong shape, in the bottom of which counters, for reckoning, were ranged in grooves or furrows. Holyday has given a coarse print of one, from Pignorius. In some (which I have seen,) the counters traversed on graduated wires, and furnished an easy and compendious mode of calculation. The next lines will remind the reader of the economical sand-boards of the Madras School, which, as the reader sees, were no novelty eighteen centuries ago.

VER. 247. *Ædile of some paltry town.*] This does not at first sight appear very applicable to Nero ; but wait a moment, and you shall see how neatly it is brought home to him. “ L’ allusion,” says the French translator, “ continue ici ; peut-être que

Bursting with self-conceit—with pride elate.—
 Because, forsooth, in magisterial state,
 His worship (ædile of some paltry town,)
 Broke scanty weights, and put short measures down.
 Far, too, be he—the monstrous witty fool,
 Who turns the numeral scale to ridicule ;
 Derides the problems traced in dust or sand,
 And treads out all Geometry has plann'd—
 Who roars outright to see Nonaria seize,
 And tug the cynick's beard.—To such as these,

Perse a toujours Neron en vue, et que pour masquer le personnage il fait semblant de parler d'un Edile d'Aretium." No doubt :—and if we look a little more narrowly after Nonaria in the next line, I more than suspect that, like Sir Hugh Evans, we shall *spie a peard under her muffler*. Depend upon it, it is still Nero in disguise.

VER. 249. *Far too, be he, &c.*] Two sets of persons are here stigmatized. The first is the downright clown, who ridicules every thing with which he is not familiar, and *labours for a joke*, at the sight of personal defects. The brutal stupidity of this piece of arrogance is happily dashed out at a single stroke: *lusce!*—(halloo! blind man!)—this is all the wit which the lout can muster. The other is the sprightly blockhead, who, mainly ignorant, and, like Swift's captain, intrepidly boastful of his ignorance, derides all science, and enjoys the ridicule of its professors. There is much to praise in this passage: the poetry is good, the wit poignant, the satire well-directed: nothing, in short, seems wanting but judgment. How did it escape the author that there was no necessity whatever for repelling such characters as are here described from his writings? They, of all men, were the least likely to approach them, and his signi-

His mane edictum, post prandia Callirhoën do.

ficant *avaunt* ! his labour in painting two serpents, was therefore entirely gratuitous.

VER. 253. ——— to see *Nonaria*, &c.] i. e. according to the criticks, a common woman; so called, Holyday says, “ because such base queans might not be resorted to until the *ninth* hour, or (with us) three in the afternoon.” But these *base queans* appear to have been pretty much at liberty, and to have had the whole day as well as the whole town for their range. *Nonaria*, if not a real name, was probably some ignorant and impudent woman, who like *Baucis*, in the fourth Satire, cried pot-herbs to the lowest of the people, and was encouraged by the despiser of philosophy to insult the age and gravity of the passing stranger.

VER. 255. ——— the *Prætor's bill*.] This was a kind of programma, drawn up by authority, and announcing the publick amusements, or business of the day. It was fixed upon the walls and posts, where it probably “ stood rubrick,” and attracted the idle and dissolute. It is termed *edictum ludorum* and *edictum muneris gladiatoris* by Pliny, from whom *Marcilius*,

I recommend, at morn, the Prætor's bill,
At night, Calirrhoë, or—what they will.

(after quoting a variety of similar names,) cites the following apposite passage : “ *Nemo qui parturienti filiæ obstetricem accersit edictum et ludorum ordinem perlegit.*” Epist. xcvi.

“ Calirrhoë ” is taken by the Scholiast and others (I know not why) for a common woman ; but if, as they say, we have just had one in Nonaria, another is not necessary to the poet's object. Others suppose it was a tragedy of this name, which the idlers are invited to see. But where did the criticks learn that the Roman theatre was open in the evening ? It seems far more probable that it was a popular tale, and that the poet meant to recur to the subject with which he opened his Satire.

———— “ Ecce inter pocula quærunt

“ Romulidæ saturi quid dia poemata narrent ? ”

Calirrhoë is precisely such a woeful ditty as Phillis and Hypsipyle : there is a seduction, a flight, a murder,—in a word, every thing to melt and charm the *tender-hefted natures*—*quæis circum humeros hyacinthina læna est.*

SATIRE II.

SATIRE II.

Argument.

It was the custom of the Romans (as has been more than once observed) to offer vows, and send presents to their relations and friends on their birth days; and Persius, who probably knew that his beloved Macrinus, like Horace's Censorinus, delighted in verse, embraces the opportunity of this festival, to send him, instead of the viridem umbellam, the succina grandia, &c. an excellent moral and religious poem.

In this little piece, which assumes a tone almost too serious and solemn for satire, the author had in view the second Alcibiades of Plato, the matter of which he has compressed, and arranged with great care.

Addison has prettily analyzed this celebrated Dialogue in the Spectator; (No. 207.) where he observes, as Dryden had done before him, that the 10th Satire of Juvenal was also formed upon it. In the argument to his translation, Dryden has divided this Satire into three several heads; but more were evidently contemplated by the author. To pass the Exordium, or congratulatory address to Macrinus, there is first an enumeration of interested and impious prayers; prayers, which, too iniquitous for the ear of man, can only be trusted to the gods in private; this is followed by a spirited exposure of those extravagant and ridiculous petitions for superfluous objects, which originate in ignorance and superstition. We have next an indignant reproof of the rash expectations of those who frame requests for blessings which they madly labour to defeat by the excess of their own vices: the Satire then takes a more serious turn, and traces the source of these miserable errors, to the corrupt and vicious ideas entertained respecting the gods; concluding with

some just and elevated remarks on the true nature of sacrifice and prayer, which, as Sir W. Drummond elsewhere observes, might be written up, in more than one Christian temple.'

Dryden tells us, in his concluding notes on this Satire, that, "the first half of it was translated by one of his sons, then in Italy: he thought so well of it," he adds, "that he let it pass without alteration." That he could not have improved it, would be too much to affirm; but, in justice it must be said, that few will dissent from his opinion. It is spirited, poetical, and just.

A. PERSII FLACCI

SATIRÆ.

AD PLOTIUM MACRINUM.

[SAT. II. V. 1—2.

HUNC, Macrine, diem numera meliore lapillo,
Qui tibi labentes apponit candidus annos.

Plotius Macrinus.] The pseudo-Cornutus, who appears to have had access to the scholia of an earlier and more judicious critick than himself, tells us that this person was a man of considerable learning, and tenderly attached to our poet. He studied, he adds, in the house of Servilius, (who is incidentally mentioned as tutor to Persius,) so that they were, in some sort, fellow students. Cornutus is not very explicit in his language, but, as far as he can be understood, he seems to hint at Macrinus having been favoured in the purchase of an estate, either by Servilius or our poet.

There is another Macrinus,—Minucius,—to whom Britannicus and others suppose this Satire to be addressed : but he was apparently too late in point of time.

Brewster printed a version of this Satire in 1733, as a specimen, proposing to “ continue the work if he met with due encouragement.” He was then a young man, and naturally diffi-

SATIRES

OF

PERSIUS.

TO PLOTIUS MACRINUS;

(ON HIS BIRTH DAY.)

SAT. II. V. 1—4.]

HEALTH to my friend! and while my vows I pay,
O mark, Macrinus, this auspicious day,
Which, to your sum of years already flown,
Adds yet another,—with a whiter stone.

dent of his abilities. What encouragement he received I know not; but the translation of Persius, as we now have it, did not appear till about fifteen years afterwards. It is pleasing to observe how greatly he had improved in the interval in harmony and spirit, for his first attempt is scarcely recognizable in the finished work. Of one hundred and sixty lines, of which the translation now consists, more than one hundred and forty are either new, or materially improved from the earlier copy. All this may be matter of very little concern to the reader; and yet some advantage may be derived from it at a time, when so many youthful candidates for immortality, *rhyme ere they wake, and print before term ends*. Had Brewster printed the whole of his Satires at first, (and it appears he had them all before him,) we should not at this time hear of his name;

**Funde merum Genio. Non tu prece poscis emaci,
Quæ nisi seductis nequeas committere divis.**

whereas he holds, and ever will hold, an honourable rank among those who have familiarised the ancients to the English reader.

VER. 4-6. *Mark———with a whiter stone.*] “The Scythians” (Cornutus says, the Cretans) “were accustomed to mark every happy day with a white stone, and every unhappy day with a black one; at the expiration of the year, or, as Pliny has it, of their lives, the heaps were counted, (a pleasant amusement at a burying,) and if the white predominated in number, they rejoiced:” if otherwise, (it is to be presumed,) they wept; though the Scythians were not much addicted to the *melting mood*. From them, say the criticks, who speak as if they wished to be believed, the Romans borrowed the practice.

This idle tale is handed down from age to age. It makes indeed a pretty figure in poetry;

“Et si calculus omnis huc et illuc

“Diversus bicolorque digeratur;

“Vincet candida turba nigriorem:” *Mart. lib. xii. 34.*

and not a contemptible one in a tritcal essay on mortality:—but the expression is merely metaphorical, and means nothing more than lucky. It would probably puzzle more metaphysical heads than ever stood upon a Scythian’s shoulders, to distinguish the happy days from the unhappy ones:—and were there no neutrals? Were their days never chequered? Did the evening always set upon the fortune of the morning? A rude and barbarous people,

“Quorum plaustra vagas rite trahunt domos,”

would scarcely occupy themselves in seeking for black and white stones to mark the colour of their fortune; and all others would speedily discover the futility of so ridiculous a practice.

VER. 5. *Indulge your Genius, &c.*] Of this tutelary divinity, (if so he may be called,) I can give no better account, than that

Indulge your Genius; drench in wine your
cares :

It is not yours, with mercenary prayers,
To ask of Heaven what, you would die with shame,
(Unless you drew the gods aside,) to name ;

which has been so frequently quoted from Censorinus : “ *Genius est Deus, cujus in tutela, ut quisque natus est, vivit. Hic, sive quod, ut genamur, curat, sive quod una genitur nobiscum, sive etiam quod nos genitos suscipit ac tuetur: certe à genendo Genius adpellatur.*” *De die Nat.* This is not a little indistinct and confused ; and indeed the ancients seem to have been sorely perplexed, both as to the nature and the attributes of this god, whom they set over “ the little state of man.”—That we may not be too much alarmed at the extent of his province and the weight of his cares, Censorinus lets us know that he had many co-adjutors : “ *alii sunt præterea dii complures, hominum vitam, pro sua quisque portione, adminiculantes.*” The birth-day, however, was sacred to the Genius alone, and was celebrated with every mark of festivity. The customary offerings were incense, wine, and flowers : and the priest stood unbloody, if not unblamed ;—because, as Censorinus tells us from Varro, (and it is a pretty fancy) *cum munus annale Genio solverent, manum a cæde ac sanguine abstinere, ne die qua ipsi lucem acceperant, aliis demerent.*

Sir W. Drummond, who quotes a similar observation from Laurentius, *natale sacrum Genio factum sine victima*, calls it a mistake ; as is proved, he says, by these lines :

“ Natali, Corvine, die mihi dulcior hæc lux,

“ Qua festus promissa deis ANIMALIA cespes

“ Expectat.”——

That Laurentius is wrong seems probable ; but the passage here adduced by no means proves him so. The poet is not speaking of a birth-day ; but of a vow made in consequence of his friend's escape from shipwreck. Had the critick gone only a line further, he would have discovered, to his amazement, that

At bona pars procerum tacita libabit acerra :
 Haud cuivis promptum est, murmurque, humi-
 lesque susurros
 Tollere de templis, et aperto vivere voto.
 Mens bona, fama, fides,—hæc clare, et ut audiat
 hospes :
 Illa sibi introrsum, et sub lingua immurmurat: *O si
 Ebullit patruī præclarum funus ! et, O si*

the ANIMALS were sacrificed to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva ; and that the festival had nothing whatever to do with the Genius either of Juvenal or Catullus.

There is a passage in Horace far more germane to the matter :

“ Ridet argento domus : ara, castis

“ Vincita verbenis, avet immolato

“ Spargier agno.”

This was on the birth-day of Mæcenas. But the critick is not fortunate : he has a quotation in the line immediately preceding this, to prove the existence of a custom to which it has *no* relation ; while it establishes, beyond doubt, the practice which he attempted to elucidate by another quotation *not at all* connected with it.

“ Moris erat quondam, &c.

“ Et natalitium cognatis ponere lardum,

“ Accedente nova, si quam dabat hostia, carne.”

Having thus skilfully (in imitation of Terence's consultation of lawyers) rendered the matter more perplexed than before, I humbly leave the reader to settle the point with Varro and Laurentius, as he can ; observing only, how unsafe it is to venture a universal affirmative respecting any part of the religious worship of the ancients, among whom so great a laxity prevailed in these matters, that the gods themselves must have been frequently puzzled to distinguish their own rites.

Persius has copied Seneca, in this place : “ *Quanta dementia*

While other nobles stand, with down-cast eyes,
And, with a silent censer, tempt the skies!—

Hard, hard the task, from the low, mutter'd
prayer,

To free the fanes ; or find one suppliant there,
Who dares to ask but what his state requires,
And live to heaven and earth with known desires !

Sound sense—integrity—a conscience clear—
Are begg'd aloud, that all at hand may hear ;
But prayers like these, (half-whisper'd, half-sup
prest,)

The tongue scarce hazards from the conscious
breast:

*O that I could my rich old uncle see,
In funeral pomp ! O, that some deity,*

*est hominum ? Turpissima vota diis insusurrant ; si quis admoverit
aurem conticescent ; et quod scire hominem nolunt, deo narrant."*

VER. 16.—*that all at hand may hear.*]—*ut audiat hospēs ;*
i. e. such as incidentally entered the temple to pray : "strangers
and standers by," as Holyday correctly renders it.

VER. 19. *O, that I could, &c.*] —*O si*

Ebullit patrum præclarum funus, &c.] Cornutus reads
ebulliat, and is followed by Marcilius and others ; the word,
however, is utterly repugnant to every metrical canon, and
therefore inadmissible. It is wantonly introduced too, for
ebullit has both reason and authority on its side. It is an ar-
chaism, of which Casaubon produces many examples, such as
axim for *egerim*, *dedim* for *dederim*, *comedim* for *comederim*, &c.
But the old scholiast has blundered in the meaning as well as
the metre of the line :—*non præclarum funus*, he says, *sed quia*
præclaram dat hæreditatem !

*Sub rastro crepet argenti mihi seria dextro
 Hercule ! pupillumve utinam, quem proximus hæres
 Impello, expungam ! namque est scabiosus, et acri
 Bile tumet. Nerio jam tertia ducitur uxor.—*

Hæc sancte ut poscas, Tiberino in gurgite mergis
 Mane caput bis, terque ; et noctem flumine purgas.

Heus age, responde ; (minimum est quod scire
 laboro ;)

De Jove quid sentis ? estne, ut præponere cures
 Hunc cuiquam ? “ cuinam ? ” vis Staio ? An scilicet
 hæres !

Persius has made grievous encroachments on the property of Horace in this part of his Satire ; but they are, like his depredations in general, too obvious for particular notice : in return, he has shewn much good taste in the application of what he has taken. Nothing can be more ingenious, in fact, than the manner in which he has contrived to frame these impious requests, and calm the conscience of his votary. The suppliant meditates no injury to any one. The death of his uncle is concealed under a wish that he could see his magnificent funeral ! which, as the poor man must one day die, is a prayer becoming a pious nephew, who was to inherit his fortune. Boileau has noted the humour of this passage, and given it in his happiest manner :

“ Oh, que, si cet hiver un rhume salulaire,
 “ Guérissant de tous maux mon avare beau-pere,
 “ Pourroit, bien confessé, l'étendre en un cercueil,
 “ Et remplie sa maison d'un agréable deuil,
 “ Que mon ame en ce jour de joie et d'opulence,
 “ D'un superbe convoi plaindroit peu la dépense ! ”

The bien confessé is admirable.

*To pots of buried gold would guide my share.—
 O, that my ward, whom I succeed as heir,
 Were once at rest ! poor child, he lives in pain,
 And death, to him, must be accounted gain.—
 By wedlock, thrice has Nerius swell'd his store,
 And now—is he a widower, once more !*

These blessings, with due sanctity, to crave,
 Once, twice, and thrice, in Tiber's eddying wave
 He dips each morn ; and bids the stream convey
 The gather'd evils of the night, away !

One question friend, (an easy one, 'twill prove.)
 Without reserve, what are your thoughts of Jove ?
 Would you prefer him to the herd of Rome ?
 To any individual ?—But, to whom ?

The second petition is quite innocent.—If people will foolishly bury their gold, and overlook or forget it, there is no more harm in his finding it than another : the third is even laudable ; it is a prayer uttered, in pure tenderness of heart, for the relief of a poor suffering child. With respect to the last——there can be no wrong in mentioning a fact which every body knows.—Not a syllable is said of his own wife : if the gods are pleased to take a hint and remove her, that is their concern ; he never asked it.

For *ducitur* many of the old criticks read *conditur*. This is only worth notice, as it serves to shew how they understood the text ; since it is an evident gloss, and like a hundred other glosses has, in some copies, usurped the place of the genuine word.

VER. 28. *Once, twice, and thrice, &c.*] Ablutions were familiar to the Romans, having descended to them from the

Quis potior iudex? puerisve quis aptior orbis?
 Hoc igitur, quo tu Jovis aurem impellere tentas,
 Dic agedum Staio: Pro Jupiter! O bone, clame-
 met,

Jupiter!—At sese non clamet Jupiter ipse?

Ignovisse putas, quia cum tonat, ocyus ilex
 Sulfure discutitur sacro, quam tuque domusque?
 An, quia non fibris ovium, Ergennaque jubente,
 Triste jaces lucis, evitandumque bidental,

earliest ages: a running stream was considered to possess superior efficacy in this typical purification of the mind, and the number three, however applied, had always something of mysterious import in it. But I know not if Persius does not mean to insinuate here, that his supplicant was attached to the Egyptian superstition, of which lustration formed a conspicuous feature. Juvenal, who has noticed this at some length, seems indebted to Persius:

“ Hibernum fracta glacie descendit in amnem,

“ Ter matutino Tiberi mergetur,” &c. Sat. vi.

VER. 35. *To Staius, &c.*] The old Scholiast exhibits a caution in this place not very usual with him. “ *Nomen fictum* (he says) *quomodo supra Nerio.*” He afterwards, indeed, discovers a certain Staius, who poisoned his wife, defrauded his ward, &c. but this person was a contemporary of Cicero, by whom he is mentioned. Unhappily, the poet's own times supplied corrupt judges and treacherous guardians, of the name, and he was not always in the mood to hunt back for what lay immediately before him.

There is great bitterness in the poet's *Cuinam*? The man of prayer will not venture to decide till he hears the name of the individual whose virtues, as guardian and judge, are to be weighed

Suppose we say—to Staius? Hah! a pause?
 Which, of the two, would best maintain the laws?
 Best shield the tender orphan? Good! Now move
 The suit to Staius which you urg'd to Jove:
 “O Jove!” he cries, “O gracious Jove! no
 shame?”

And must not Jove himself on Jove exclaim?

Or dost thou think the impious wish forgiven,
 Because, when thunder shakes the vault of heaven,
 The bolt innoxious flies o'er thee and thine,
 To rend the forest oak and mountain pine?
 —Because, yet livid from the lightning's scath,
 Thy smouldering corpse (a monument of wrath)
 Lies in no blasted grove, for publick care
 To expiate, with sacrifice and prayer:

against those of Jupiter; even then he hesitates till he is incidentally reminded that the person selected *par excellence*, had defrauded his ward in one instance, and condemned the innocent in another: this overcomes his delicate scruples; and he tacitly admits the god to be the best of the two.

VER. 40. *And must not Jove himself on Jove exclaim.*]—at *sese non clamet Jupiter ipse?* This accords but ill with the grave and solemn tone of what precedes and follows; and though its wit may strike for a moment, it is with a false glare. Casaubon seems to have puzzled himself as well about the reading, as the sense, of this simple passage.

VER. 46. *Thy smouldering corpse, &c.* It has been already observed (Juv. Sat. vi. v. 586.) that the ancients had singular notions respecting lightning. They regarded it with a superstitious horror, of which we can have but a faint conception,

Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam
 Jupiter? aut quidnam est, qua tu mercede Deo-
 rum

Emeris auriculas? pulmone, et lactibus unctis!

Ecce avia, aut metuens divûm matertera, cunis
 Exemit puerum, frontemque atque uda labella .
 Infami digito, et lustralibus ante salivis

and as a visible manifestation of divine wrath: hence whatever was struck with it, was looked on as sacred, (in its ceremonial sense of devoted, or accursed,) and separated from human uses.

I cannot understand Sir W. Drummond's note, on this passage. "It was the duty of the priest, (he says,) to decide where dead bodies should be interred." But there was no *decision* in the present case. The corpse of the person struck by lightning was *never* moved from its place; where it fell, it lay, and, with every thing pertaining to it, was covered with earth, and encircled by a rail or mound. "But Persius (he continues) does not inform us, if any mark served to warn strangers not to approach the *tomb*," &c. What "mark?" The word itself implied an enclosed piece of ground, and nothing more was necessary. "The place of interment being a grove, was not remarkable nor extraordinary." This is a continuation of the error with which the note began. The text is very plain. Because, says Persius, you were not struck instead of the tree, (alluding to the *ilex* of the preceding line) and do not lie in the forest, a monument of divine vengeance, you suppose, &c. The "grove" therefore is an incidental circumstance, not a matter of preference: had the person been killed by lightning in the highway, or the forum, there he must have lain, and there he must have had his *bidental*.

Brewster seems to have followed Holyday in his note on this passage, and translated *bidens* two sheep, instead of a sheep two years old;

Must, therefore, Jove, unscepter'd and unfear'd,
 Give, to thy ruder mirth, his foolish beard ?
 What bribe hast thou to win the Powers divine,
 Thus, to thy nod ? the lungs and lights of swine !

Lo ! from his little crib, the grandam hoar,
 Or aunt, well vers'd in superstitious lore,
 Snatches the babe ; in lustral spittle dips
 Her middle finger, and anoints his lips,

——— “ Great Ergenna purifies

“ The place, by offering the entrails of *two sheep*.”—

Ergenna (who was any thing but *great*) is termed a Tuscan, by the critics : the name, like Porsenna, Sisenna, &c. is, no doubt, Tuscan ; and that he was also, like many of his countrymen, a soothsayer, seems implied in his office ; at least, Juvenal places him in the worshipful fraternity of “ philomaths,” in his sixth Satire.

VER. 55. ——— *in lustral spittle, &c.*] On the ninth day of its birth, the infant underwent some expiatory ceremonies, and received a name : the festival was termed *dies lustricus* ; and the officious gossip takes the opportunity of this solemn presentation, to *effascinate* the child, (as Holyday calls it,) and to offer up her prayers for its happiness ! Her spell is not of the first order :—but the ancients were all gossips here ; and even the philosopher Pliny observes, with a gravity which would not misbecome the *avia*, or *matertera* of the text,—“ *in hominis saliva vim esse adversus veneficia et fascinationes.*” Dryden has translated this passage somewhat coarsely, for which he is not unjustly reprehended by Sir W. Drummond. The latter, however, is wrong in his turn. Dryden’s lustration, he says, would, indeed, be a very nasty one.” But he mistakes the meaning of his words, which is precisely that of his own—with *spittle daubs its face*. Dryden was a great master of the English language ;

Expiat, urentes oculos inhibere perita.

Tunc manibus quatit, et Spem macram, supplice
voto,

Nunc Licini in campos, nunc Crassi mittit in
ædes.

Hunc optent generum rex et regina ! puellæ

Hunc raptant ! quicquid calcaverit hic, rosa fiat !

Ast ego nutrici non mando vota : negato,

Jupiter ! hæc illi, quamvis te albata rogârit.

Poscis opem nervis, corpusque fidele senectæ :
Esto, age : sed grandes patinæ, tucetaque crassa

and it is therefore far more safe to question his taste than his knowledge.

Holyday has translated *spem macram supplice voto*——

—— “ they vainly spend

“ Their poor lean hope in prayer to Jove,” &c.

by which the humour of the original is quite lost. *Spem macram* is the poor puny wretchcock in whom the good old grandmother sees the future son-in-law of kings.

In the modest prayer which follows, there is considerable **pleasantry** : though it is probably not much unlike many of those that were really offered on such occasions. There is some doubt as to the Crassus and Licinius of whom she speaks ; (for there were many of the name immeasurably rich ;) but the matter is of little importance. It is sufficient to know that they must have been proverbial for the immensity of their possessions, and their names *familiar as household words* in the mouths of the people.

VER. 74. —— *high-season'd dish.*] *Tucetaque crassa*. From the receipt for making it, which is incidentally given by Apuleius, the *tucetum* appears to come very near our *minced-pie*. “ *Sed*

And forehead :—" Charms of potency," she cries,
 " To break the influence of evil eyes !"

The spell complete, she dandles high in air
 Her starveling Hope ; and breathes a humble
 prayer,

That heaven would only tender to his hands,
 All Crassus' houses ! all Licinius' lands !—

" Let every gazer by his charms be won,
 " And kings and queens aspire to call him son ;
 " Contending virgins fly his smiles to meet,
 " And roses spring where'er he sets his feet !"

Insane of soul !—But I, O Jove, am free ;
 Thou know'st, I trust no nurse with prayers for
 me :

In mercy, then, reject each fond demand,
 Though, robed in white, she at thy altar stand.
 This begs for nerves to pain and sickness steel'd ;
 A frame of body, that shall slowly yield
 To late old age : 'Tis well ; enjoy thy wish.—
 But the huge platter, and high-season'd dish,

*tantum caram meam Fotidem, quæ suis dominis parabat viscum
 fartim concisum, et pulpam frustatim collectam ad pascua juru-
 lenta, et quidem naribus jam mihi ariolabar tucetum perquam
 sapidissimum.*" lib. ii. Marcilius takes it to be a kind of rich
 jelly, "*crasso jure et quasi glaciali :*" whatever it was, it must
 have been a very savoury dish ; *esca regia*, as Fulgentius calls
 it,

—— " ambrosio redolent tuceta sapore,"

Annuere his Superos vetuêre, Jovemque morantur.

Rem struere exoptas cæso bove, Mercuriumque
Arcessis fibra :—*Da fortunare penates !*

Da pecus, et gregibus factum ! Quo, pessime,
pacto,

Tot tibi cum in flammis junicum omenta liques-
cant ?

Et tamen hic extis, et opimo vincere ferto

Intendit : *jam crescit ager, jam crescit ovile ;*

Jam dabitur, jamjam : donec, deceptus et exspes,

Nequicquam fundo suspiret nummus in imo.

Si tibi crateras argenti, incusaque pingui

Auro dona feram, sudes, et pectore lævo

Excutias guttas, lætari prætrepidum cor.

Hinc illud subiit, auro sacras quòd ovato

The “ cat’s-meat,”—the *pulmo* and the *lactes* which the Romans piously set apart for the gods, are well contrasted by the poet, with the expensive luxuries reserved for their own tables.

VER. 93. ——— *drops of joy would start, &c.*] *Excutias guttas.* i. e. Casaubon tells us, to weep for joy, which he proves by many weighty authorities, the ancients sometimes did. But these *drops* came *not* from the brain, but from the heart—*pectore lævo*, an expression which he seems also (as Gale observes,) to misunderstand, since he considers it equivalent to *mens læva*, “ stricken with folly.” Persius evidently alludes to that insensible perspiration, that humid suffusion of the skin, which a sudden and unexpected flow of good fortune will sometimes produce. It is an amplification of his first word, *sudes*, and is both natural and pleasing.

Day after day, the willing gods withstand ;
And dash the blessing from their opening hand.

That sues for wealth : the labouring ox is slain,
And frequent victims woo the “ god of gain.”

“ O crown my hearth with plenty and with peace,
And give my flocks and herds a large increase !”—
Madman ! how can he, when, from day to day,
Steer after steer, in offerings, melts away ?—

Still he persists ; and still new hopes arise,
With harslet and with tripe, to storm the skies.

“ Now teem my folds ! now swell my harvests !
now,

“ It comes, it comes—auspicious to my vow !”
While thus, poor wretch, he hangs ’twixt hope and
fear,

He starts, in dreadful certainty, to hear
His chest reverberate the hollow groan
Of his last piece, to find itself alone !

If from my side-board, I should bid you take
Goblets of gold or silver, you would quake
With eager rapture ; drops of joy would start,
And your left breast scarce hold your fluttering
heart :

Hence, you presume the gods are bought and sold ;
And overlay their busts with captured gold.

VER. 96. *And overlay their busts with captured gold.*—*auro ovato*, i. e. with gold taken in war, and carried in the ovation

Perducis facies ; nam fratres inter ahenos,
Somnia pituita qui purgatissima mittunt,
Præcipui sunt, sitque illis aurea barba.

Aurum vasa Numæ, Saturniaque impulit æra,
Vestalesque urnas, et Tuscum fictile mutat.

or triumph with which the conquering army was honoured, on its return to Rome. The poet, as Shakspeare says, had probably some *moral* in his choice of *ovatum* ; but I cannot decipher it : and whether any superstitious value was attached to gold thus acquired, or whether the expression was merely satirical, and meant to characterise the boundless ambition and rapacity of the Romans, must be left to the reader. Holyday, whose version is a perpetual commentary on the text, thus renders it : using *purchase* somewhat in the emphatic sense of corporals Nym and Bardolph :

———— “ hence 'tis, thou dost hold
“ The gods are pleased so too, and overlay'st
“ Their statues faces, that *thereby thou may'st*
“ *Procure their favour*, with gold purchased
“ From the enemy, which was in triumph led.”

The old scholiast has another fancy on this expression. *Ovato*, he says, “ *sive quod ovo perfundantur statuæ ut bractea melius inhaerescat* ;” a practice, indeed, noticed by the elder Pliny, lib. xiii.) “ *sive quod bractea talis est qualis ovi membrana*.” The good man here confounds the yolk of the egg with the white : the fault, as Sir Hugh Evans says, is in the *ord* ; but the explanation itself is worth noticing. He afterwards adds, as a second thought—“ *Ovato quia medium ovi simile est* !” This humbles the thing prodigiously.

VER. 97. *For, of the brazen brotherhood &c.*] “ There stood in the porch of the Palatine Apollo, fifty brazen statues of the fifty sons of Egyptus, the brother of Danaus ; they were be-

For, of the brazen brotherhood, the Power
 Who sends you dreams, at morning's truer hour,
 Most purg'd from phlegm, enjoys your best re-
 gards,

And a gold beard his prescient skill rewards !

Now, from the temples, GOLD has chased the
 plain

And frugal ware of Numa's pious reign ;
 The ritual pots of brass are seen no more,
 And Vesta's pitchers blaze in burnish'd ore.

lieved to have the power of answering all inquiries, in dreams of the night." So say the commentators

One of our old poets tells us that "*mons*, a mountain, cometh from *movendo*, because it *standeth still*:" and a similar train of reasoning seems to have influenced those who first gave the faculty of inspiring dreams to the fifty sons of *Ægyptus*. These poor youths were the last persons in the world who should have been selected for such a province: they were married to their fifty cousins, and without foreseeing or even dreaming of their fate, had their throats cut, like so many calves, ("*velut vituli*") in the same night, with the exception of one, who was roused out of a sound sleep by his wife——

“ Surge, quæ dixit juveni marito,

“ Surge, ne longus tibi somnus, unde

“ Non times, detur.”——

M. Raoul thinks that by *fratres aheneos* Persius means all the gods together——qui en effet sont frères à-peu-près, si on remonte à leur origine. It may be so: and, in truth, since it appears that all the honour meant them, may be simply laquering their beards “with the yolks of eggs,” there is less necessity for anxiously pursuing the inquiry.

O curvæ in terris animæ, et cœlestium inanes !
 Quid juvat hoc, templis nostros immittere mores,
 Et bona Dîs ex hac scelerata ducere pulpa ?
 Hæc sibi corrupto casiam dissolvit olivo,
 Et Calabrum coxit vitiato murice vellus ;
 Hæc baccam conchæ rasisse, et stringere venas
 Ferventis massæ crudo de pulvere jussit.
 Peccat et hæc—peccat ; vitio tamen utitur : at
 vos

Dicite, pontifices, in sancto quid facit aurum ?
 Nempe hoc, quod Veneri donatæ à virgine puppæ.

VER. 105. *O grovelling souls, &c.]* Persius is and is not a Stoick in various parts of this Satire. It is true, that he might have somewhat profited by the ethical Dialogue before him ; but it is no less certain, that a brighter gleam must have occasionally broke upon the darkness of his mind, than the torch of Plato ever afforded : that he was unconscious of its source, is his misfortune. What Cornutus thought of this, cannot be told : he could not but see, however, that though the words, in this section, were those of the Porch, they were used in a more spiritual sense than the wisest and best of its secretaries ever gave them.

VER. 109. *This the Calabrian fleece, &c.]* Thus Virgil ;

“ Alba nec Assyrio fucatur lana veneno

“ Nec casia liquidi corrumpitur usus olivi.”

Both use the language of the old republick ; and consider the oil of the country to be vitiated, instead of improved, by the luxurious admixture of foreign spices ; the consumption of which at Rome, must have been immense at this period, since they were infused into every dish and almost into every cup. The con-

O grovelling souls ! and void of things divine !
 Why bring our passions to the Immortals' shrine,
 And judge, from what this CARNAL SENSE delights,
 Of what is pleasing in their purer sights?—
 THIS the Calabrian fleece with purple soils,
 And taints with rich perfume, our native oils ;
 Tears from the rocky conch its pearly store,
 And strains the metal from the glowing ore :
 THIS, THIS, indeed, is vicious ; yet it tends
 To gladden life, perhaps ; and boasts its ends ;
 But you, ye pontifs, (for ye know) declare,
 “ What gold avails in sacrifice and prayer ?”
 No more, alas ! than the poor puppets laid,
 On Venus' altar, by the riper maid,

clusion of this spirited passage is closely followed by Prudentius :

“ ——— gemma, bombyx, purpura,

“ In carnis usum mille quæruntur dolis.”

VER. 117. *No more, alas ! &c.*] Persius answers his own question, and more directly, perhaps, than the priests would have done. “ The *puppæ*,” Dryden says, “ were little babies, puppets as we call them, which the girls, when they came to the age of puberty, offered to Venus.” The act is clear—the motive is not so well known. He translates it—

“ As maids to Venus offer baby-toys,

“ To bless the marriage-bed with girls and boys.”

which seems to be taken from Stelluti : *pupazze à Venere offerte per haverla propizia nel matrimonio accio da lei fusse lor concessi veri bamboli, e vere bambole* ; and though fanciful, falls in with

Quin damus id Superis, de magna quod dare
lance

Non possit magni Messalæ lippa propago ;
Compositum jus fasque animo, sanctosque recessus
Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto :
Hæc cedo ut admoveam templis, et farre litabo.

the tenor of the Satire in this place, which refers all the ostentation of piety to a principle of selfishness. Others suppose that these "baby toys" were presented to the goddess, in token of the votarist having relinquished all childish amusements. But whatever be the purport of the practice, the poet is only concerned with the worthlessness of these play-things, which he merely introduces as illustrative of the utter inefficacy of gold in sacrifice and prayer.

VER. 121. *What, great Messala ! thy degenerate heir, &c]*
Messalæ lippa propago—The old scholiast who seldom missed what he determined to find, says that this was one Cotta Messalinus, who, in his old age, was afflicted with an extraordinary inversion of the eyelids : but by *lippus*, Persius, like a good Stoick, probably means mentally blind, vicious. Others of the Messalæ are pointed out. It seems sufficient, however, to observe that the allusion is to some degenerate descendant of Corvinus Messala, one of the most illustrious generals and statesmen of the old republick. In what follows,

" Compositum jus fasque animo, sanctosque recessus
" Mentis, et incoctum generoso pectus honesto,"

Persius may be more easily admired than translated. His lines are not only the quintessence of sanctity, but of language. Closeness would cramp, paraphrase would enfeeble their sense, which, like Juvenal's abstract idea of a perfect poet, may be felt but cannot be expressed.

(The playthings of the child.)—O, be it mine,
 To bring, when'er I tread the courts divine,
 What, great Messala! thy degenerate heir,
 From his great charger, cannot offer there,
 Justice to man, essentially combined
 With piety to god, in the pure mind;
 The heart's devout recesses; the clear breast,
 With generous honour's glowing stamp imprest,
 And Heaven will hear the humble prayer I make,
 Though all my offering be a barley cake.

It is pleasing to observe with what judgment Horace has adapted a similar thought to the plain understanding of his village maid:

“ Immunis aram si tetigit manus

“ Non sumptuosa blandior hostia

“ Mollibit aversos penates

“ Farre pio et saliente mica.”

Seneca too says well, and Persius probably had it in his thoughts, “ *Nec in victimis, licet optimæ sint, auroque præfulgeant, deorum est honos; sed piâ et rectâ voluntate venerantium: itaque boni etiam farre ac fictili religiosi sunt.*” &c.

VER. 122. *From his great charger, &c.*] It is extraordinary that Brewster should confound the *lanx* with the *acerra*, and translate it censer. “The *lanx*,” he says, “was a large censer, appropriated to the rich—sometimes the rich made use of the *acerra* also, a little censer belonging more particularly to the poor.” As many mistakes as words; but Brewster seems to have rarely looked beyond Bayle for his criticism; and sometimes contents himself with Dryden.

SATIRE III.

SATIRE III.

Argument.

This Satire opens not unhappily. A professor of the Stoick school abruptly enters the bed-room of his pupils, whom he finds asleep at mid-day. Their confusion at this detection, their real indolence amidst an affected ardour for study, are laid open, and the fatal consequences of such thoughtless conduct beautifully illustrated by apt allusions to the favourite topicks of the Porch.

The whole of this Satire manifests an earnest desire to reclaim the youthful nobility from their idle and vicious habits. The preceptor, after a brief ebullition of contempt, points out the evils to which the neglect of philosophy (i. e. the study of virtue) will expose them, and overthrows the objections which they raise against the necessity of severe application, on account of their birth and fortune. In a sublime and terrible apostrophe, he pourtrays the horrors of that late remorse which must afflict the vicious when they contemplate the fallen state to which the neglect of wisdom has consigned them. He then describes, in a lighter tone, the defects of his own education, and shews that the persons whom he addresses are without this apology for their errors: he points out with admirable brevity and force, the proper pursuits of a well-regulated mind, and teaches them to despise the scorn of the vulgar, and the rude buffoonery of those who make their wantonness their ignorance: lastly, he introduces a lively apologue of a glutton, who, in spite of advice, perseveres in his intemperance till he becomes its victim: concluding with an apposite application of the fable (more Stoicorum) to a diseased mind. The Satire and its moral may be fitly summed up in the solemn injunction of a wiser man than the Schools ever produced:—"But WISDOM is above all; therefore get WISDOM."

A. PERSII FLACCI

SATIRÆ.

[SAT. III. V. 1—8.

NEMPE hæc assidue ! Jam clarum mane fenestras
Intrat, et angustas extendit lumine rimas :

VER. 1. *What ! ever thus ?*] From the manner in which the speaker announces himself, it would seem as if he were a kind of domestick instructor, engaged perhaps, to complete the education of the young nobility who had passed through the usual discipline of the schools. Tutors of this description were invested with considerable authority, and assumed, as here, a lofty and decisive tone. With the decay of literature, and the empire, their importance diminished ; and A. Gellius has a passage in which Taurus, one of these masters of philosophy, notices their fallen state in very significant terms : “ *Nunc, inquit, videre est philosophos ultro currere, ut doceant, ad foras juvenum divitum, eosque ibi sedere atque operiri prope ad meridiem, donec discipuli nocturnum omne vinum edormiant.*” lib. x. c. 6. The opening of this Satire, in Sheridan’s translation, is the perfection of absurdity.

VER. 4. *On the fifth line the gnomon’s shadow falls.*] Holyday has a long and learned note on this subject. “ The Romans (he says) greatly differed from us in the division of the day ; for we use a civil day, i. e. the space of day and night, which we divide into twenty-four equal parts, whereas they used a natural day, which is the space from the sun rising to the sun setting, as Censorinus shews, *De Die Nat.* c. 24. ; so that their

SATIRES

OF

PERSIUS.

[SAT. III. V. 1—4.

WHAT! ever thus? See! while the beams of day,
In broad effulgence, o'er the shutters play,
Stream through the crevice, widen on the walls,
On the fifth line the gnomon's shadow falls!

hours varied according to the season of the year." At this time, therefore, "when the dog-star raged," and when each division of the dial must have been about one hour and one third of an hour long, the shadow fell upon the fifth line a little before eleven o'clock: this was about the hour of dining among the more sober people.

"Sosia, prandendum est; quartam jam totus in horam

"Sol calet; ad quintam flectitur umbra notam."

AUSON.

The invention of sun-dials has appeared so important, that great pains have been taken to discover the people to whose ingenuity mankind is indebted for it. The Chinese, the Mexicans, and half the barbarous and ignorant nations of the old and new world, have been complimented with it, in turn; but the great majority of the critics seem inclined to attribute it to the Egyptians, whose pyramids and obelisks are, it seems, nothing but magnificent gnomons. The Egyptians were undoubtedly a learned people; and, if this opinion be correct, they must have

Sertimus, indomitum quod despumare Falernum
Sufficiat, quinta dum linea tangitur umbra.

En quid agis ! siccas insana Canicula messes
Jamdudum coquit, et patula pecus omne sub ulmo
est.

Unus ait comitum ; “ Verumne ? itane ? ocyus
adsit

Huc aliquis ! nemon’ ? ” —turgescit vitrea bilis ;
Finditur, Arcadiæ pecuaria rudere credas.

Jam liber, et bicolor positis membrana capillis,
Inque manus chartæ, nodosaque venit arundo.

been fully as economical as wise. After all, the first shepherd who struck his crook into the ground, could scarcely fail to discover that he had erected a kind of sun-dial.

Tornorupæus observes, on this line, that sun-dials came into use at Rome, about the period of the first Punick war ; they were, he adds, at that time, sufficiently rude and imperfect :—*cum prius ortus et occasus postmodo meridiei ratio haberetur*. A fact taken from Pliny, who gives it much fuller and better. Lib. vii. c. 60. When the Romans had found out that these were not much to be depended on in cloudy weather, Scipio Nassica taught them the use of clepsydræ or water-clocks ; a homely contrivance, as the critick represents it : but with which they were content for ages.

VER. 9. *Here my youth rouses.*] See the note p. xiv. “ It is eagerly contested (says M. Raoul) whether the words *Unus ait comitum*, are to be understood of one of the pupils of the governor, or one of the governors of the pupil. At any rate, they are an absolute riddle. Instead, therefore, of deciding between Casaubon and Britannicus, I have judged it wiser to follow the example of Monti, and omit them altogether.” And thus Persius is translated ! For the droves of Arcadia, see Juvenal,

Yet still you sleep, and, idly stretch'd supine,
 Snore off the fumes of strong Falernian wine :
 Up ! up ! mad Sirius parches every blade,
 And flocks and herds lie panting in the shade.

Here my youth rouses, rubs his heavy eyes ;
 " Is it so late ? so *very* late ? " he cries.
 " Shame, shame ! Who waits ? Who waits there ?
 quick, my page ! "

His mounting bile o'erflows ; he foams with rage,
 And brays so loudly, that you start in fear,
 And fancy all Arcadia at your ear !

Behold him now, array'd in careless haste,
 (Books, parchment, paper, pens before him placed,)

Sat. vii. Marcilius says, "*Arcadiæ pecuaria, asini. Arcadia asinorum patria in Græcia, in Italia, Reate.*" Here is something gained : and as asses are now getting into vogue, some of our travelled gentry, perhaps, may be tempted *en passant*, to pick up one of them to improve the breed at home :— Marcilius adds, with unusual briskness, "*Comparat eleganter Flaccus hic Persius, cum illis Arcadiæ civibus hunc Arcadicum juvenem.*"

VER. 15. *Behold him now, &c.*] The pompous apparatus with which the youth proceeds to study, the book, the parchment, the paper, &c. is well described ; and has a pleasant effect when contrasted with the ridiculous result of the effort. The book, it is probable, contained the thesis, or subject of the morning's contemplation ; the charta, or coarse paper, was destined to receive his first thoughts, which, when matured and corrected, were to be transferred to the parchment for the benefit of mankind. Persius terms the parchment *bicolor*, because it was white within and yellow without ; but, indeed, the Romans seem to have been a little foppish in this article, and to

Tunc queritur, crassus calamo quod pendeat humor;
 mor;

Nigra quod infusa vanescat sepia lympha;
 Dilutâs queritur gemit quod fistula guttas.

O miser, inque dies ultra miser! hucine rerum
 Venimus? at cur non potius, teneroque columbo,
 Et similis regum pueris, pappare minutum
 Poscis, et iratus mammæ lallare recusas?

“*An tali studeam calamo?*”—Cui verba? quid
 istas

Succinis ambages? tibi luditur; effluis, amens!

have had it of all hues. Juvenal mentions *crocea membrana*, Tibullus *lutea*, a variation of the former colour, and Ovid says—

“*Nec te purpureo velent vaccinia succo.*”

The purple seems to have been the fashionable colour; it was certainly the most costly, and when we add to it the golden clasps and rollers, in which the ancients were very profuse, it may be doubted whether their libraries appeared less variegated and rich than our own. The practice seems to have reached rather a late period. St. Jerome is very angry at the use of these *purple vellums* written with letters of gold and silver. Brandt's ignorant book-hunter has a very spruce library, which yet is far excelled by that of his proto-type in Lucian, who exhibits his Βιβλίον παγκάλον, πορφύραν μὲν ἔχον τὴν διφθεράν, χρυσοῦν δὲ τὸν οὐφάλον. κ. τ. α.

Glimpses of the “Venusian lamp” break upon the reader in many of the opening passages of this Satire.

VER. 34. *Your best of life, &c.*] Here the poet gives the illustration before the example; which renders the thought obscure, and increases the difficulty of following him. He had the defective pottery in view from the first; you leak, and will

Bent o'er his thesis.—What arrests his speed ?
Alas ! the viscous liquid clogs the reed.
Dilute it. Pish ! now every word I write,
Sinks through the paper, and eludes the sight :—
Now the pen leaves no mark, the point's too fine ;
Now 'tis too blunt, and doubles every line.

O wretch ! whom every day more wretched
sees—

Are these the fruits of all your studies ? these !
Give o'er, at once ; and like some callow dove,
Some prince's heir, some lady's infant love,
Call for chew'd pap ; and, pouting at the breast,
Scream at the lullaby that woos to rest !

“ But why such warmth ? See what a pen ! nay,
see ! ”—

And is this subterfuge employed on me ?
Fond boy ! your time, with your pretext, is lost ;
And all your arts are at your proper cost.—
While with occasion thus you madly play,
Your best of life, unheeded, leaks away,

therefore be thrown aside; *contemnere*—the explanation follows. This is one of the vulgar metaphors in which the Stoicks so much delighted. They did well in borrowing from common life ; but their selection confers no great credit on their taste. I will not say, with Sir W. Drummond, that “ the whole of this passage is insufferably strained,” because the phraseology appears sufficiently familiar ; but the metaphor is involved in too many words, and the author doubles too often upon his own expressions.

Contemnere : sonat vitium percussa, maligne
Respondet viridi non cocta fidelia limo.

Udum et molle lutum es,—nunc, nunc properan-
dus, et acri

Fingendus sine fine rota.—Sed rure paterno
Est tibi far modicum, purum et sine labe salinum,
(Quid metuas ?) cultrixque foci secura patella est !

VER. 41. “ *But why these pains ? &c.*] This is the language of the “ single-soled squire” in Hall, and has been that of vicious indolence from the first moment that wealth became heritable.

“ What needs me care for anie bookish skill,
“ To blot white paper with my restless quill ;
“ Or waste o’er painted leaves, on winter nights,
“ Ill-smelling oyles, or some still-watching lights ?
“ Let them that meane to earne their bread—for me,
“ Busie their braines with deeper bookerie :
“ Have I not landes of faire inheritance
“ Derived by right of long continuance
“ To first borne males,” &c. Lib. ii. Sat. 2.

VER. 43. *A salt unsullied, &c*] — *purum et sine labe salinum*. The salt-cellar, or, as our old writers more simply termed it, the salt, formed a distinguished feature in the garniture of the Roman tables. As salt was the general seasoning of the food of man, and was also used to check the progress of putrefaction, it was associated, from the earliest ages, with notions of moral purity, and occasionally employed in metaphors too sacred to be repeated here. Salt made a part of every sacrifice, and hence the vessel which held it acquired a certain degree of sanctity ; and was supposed to consecrate the table on which, at meal times, it was reverently placed.

With these claims to peculiar veneration, the salt-cellar appears to have been regarded as a kind of heir-loom, and to have

And scorn flows in apace : the ill-baked ware,
 Rung by the potter, will its flaws declare;
 Thus ——but you yet are moist and yielding clay :
 Call for some plastick hand without delay ;
 Nor cease the labour, till the wheel produce
 A vessel nicely form'd, and fit for use.

“ But why these pains ? My father, thanks to
 fate,

Left me a fair, if not a large, estate :
 A salt unsullied on my table shines,
 And due oblations, in their little shrines,
 My household gods receive ; my hearth is pure,
 And all my means of life confirm'd, and sure :
 What need I more” ? Nay, nothing ; ('tis replied.)
 ——And well it fits you, to dilate with pride,

descended from sire to son. More cost was lavished on it than on the rest of the furniture. In the poorest times, the most frugal and rigid of the old republicans indulged themselves with a silver salt, which, with the patella, (a little platter for the offering to the household gods) was frequently all the plate they possessed. Marcilius tells us, from Livy, that when the necessities of the State obliged the Senate to call for a general sacrifice of the gold and silver of the people, the salt-cellar, and the patella were expressly exempted from the contribution.

The precise import of the words *purum et sine labe* has been questioned : they cannot relate altogether to the brightness of the silver, as the old scholiast says, for this was a matter of domestick economy, and scarcely worth a boast :—perhaps the allusion is, to the fair and honest means by which the family was raised—taking *salinum* in the large sense of competence, in

Hoc satis ? an deceat pulmonem rumpere ventis,
 Stemmata quod Tusco ramum millesime ducis ?
 Censoremne tuum vel quod trabeate salutas ?
 Ad populum phaleras ! ego te intus, et in cute
 novi.
 Non pudet ad morem discincti vivere Nattæ ?

which it sometimes occurs :—and this is strengthened by the succeeding line, in which the youth appears to reckon on the perpetuity of his wealth, from a due observance of the domestic piety of his ancestors.

VER. 50. —*from some high Tuscan race ?*] The boasts of this descent are very frequent. It would really seem as if some respectable families from Etruria, had, at a very early period, joined the vagabonds of the Asylum—*aut pastor aut illud quod dicere nolo*—and conferred a kind of *éclat* on the motley assemblage. The honour was duly appreciated ; and the Slys, *who came over with Richard Conqueror*, were not more vain of their origin, than the great men of Rome were of deducing their blood from the ancient Tuscans.

VER. 51. *And, when the knights, &c.*] Madan mistakes the sense of this passage. The allusion is not to the census, nor were the ceremonies such as he describes,—“ There was (Marcius says) a two-fold lustration (muster) of the Roman knights, *censio* and *transvectio*, and it is of the latter that Persius speaks. The *censio* was held every five years, the *transvectio* annually ; hence Dio terms it *ετησίαν ἐξέτασιν* (the spring muster.) In the *censio*, which was strictly a review, the knights marched on foot, leading their horses ; in the *transvectio* they rode : in fact, the ceremony had more of military pomp than service in it, as they appeared in *grand costume*, wearing the *trabea*, a splendid robe, bordered with bright purple, and crowned with olive wreaths. On these occasions, the knights assembled in the temple of Mars, which stood without the walls, and rode through the

Because, (the thousandth in descent,) you trace
 Your blood, unmix'd, from some high 'Tuscan race;
 And, when the knights troop by the censor's chair,
 In annual pomp, salute a kinsman there!
 Hence!—with these trappings, to the rabble, swell!
 Me, they deceive not; for I know you well,
 Within, without.—And blush you not to see,
 Loose Natta's life and yours so well agree?

streets to the Capitol, defiling by the Censors, who sat in the Forum, in front of the temple of Castor, and saluting them as they passed. This custom, which was of ancient date, had fallen, Suetonius tells us, into neglect, when it was revived by Augustus. It flourished for a few years; but as the emperors grew jealous of all authority but their own, they assumed the Censor's office, and neglected its duties; when the practice was entirely laid aside. I have already noticed the diffusiveness of Holyday; the following is an amusing instance of it:

“ Wilt swell, because clad in thy purple graine,
 “ Meeting Rome's censour with his pompous traine,
 “ Thou canst salute him by the name of *Cuzze*,
 “ And arrogantly aske him how he does?”

Who could foresee, in the author of this inaccurate verbosity, the future translator of Juvenal!

VER. 56. *Loose Natta's life, &c.*] The old Scholiast refers to Horace, in this place.

————— “ Ungor olivo,
 “ Non quo fraudatis immundus Natta lucernis :”

but the characters are totally unlike. Horace speaks of a sordid and disgusting miser, Persius of a bloated epicure, of a man so abandoned, so deeply immersed in sensuality as to be dead to the distinctions of virtue and vice. Some of the translators wish

Sed stupet hic vitio, et fibris increvit opimum
 Pingue: caret culpa; nescit quid perdat; et alto
 Demersus, summa rursus non bullit in unda.

Magne pater Divum! sævos punire tyrannos
 Haud alia ratione velis, cum dira libido
 Moverit ingenium, ferventi tincta veneno,—
 Virtutem videant, intabescantque relictæ!

to identify him with the Natta of Juvenal. Sat. viii. v. 142. This is worse than the former. If a parallel be sought in Juvenal, he will be found (if found at all) in Peribomius.

“Horum simplicitas miserabilis; his furor ipse
 “Dat veniam.”——

It would be unjust to Persius to pass unnoticed the superior force and gravity of his description: perhaps, the palsy of the mind, the deadening effect of habitual profligacy, was never more skilfully or more strikingly delineated. It is admirably translated by Holyday; and may well atone for many such passages as that just quoted from him. Dryden has done little more than copy it.

“Art not asham’d to live like dissolute
 “Loose Natta? but (alas!) he’s destitute
 “Of sense! He stands amazed in vice! the deep
 “Fat brawne of sin makes his heart soundly sleep
 “That now he doth not sinne! No, he’s so grosse,
 “So stupid, that he’s senseless of his losse!
 “And sunk down to the depth of vice, he’ll swim
 “No more againe up to the water’s brim.”

VER. 65. *Dread sire of Gods! &c.*] This is a noble apostrophe; poetical, impassioned, and even sublime: that it is ineffectual, is not the fault of Persius. Well did St. Augustin observe, in allusion to it, “*Mox ut eos libido perpulerit ferventi, ut ait Persius, tincta veneno, magis intuentur quid Jupiter (mag-*

—But Natta's is not *life* : the sleep of sin
 Has seiz'd his powers, and palsied all within ;
 Huge cawls of fat envelope every part,
 And torpor weighs on his insensate heart.—
 Absolv'd from blame by ignorance so gross,
 He neither sees, nor comprehends his loss ;
 Content in guilt's profound abyss to drop,
 Nor, struggling, send one bubble to the top.

Dread sire of Gods ! when lust's envenom'd
 stings

Stir the fierce natures of tyrannick kings ;
 When storms of rage within their bosoms roll,
 And call, in thunder, for thy just control,
 O, then relax the bolt, suspend the blow ;
 And thus, and thus alone, thy vengeance show,
 In all her charms, set Virtue in their eye,
 And let them see their loss, despair, and—die !

nus pater divum) *fecerit quàm quid docuerit Plato, vel censuerit Cato.* De Civ. Dei. lib. v.

This passage is prettily given by one of our earliest poets.

“ None other payne pray I for them to be
 “ But when the rage doth lead them from the right
 “ That looking backwarde Vertue they may see
 “ Even as she is, so goodly faire and bright,
 “ And while they claspe their lustes in arms a crosse,
 “ Graunt them good Lord, as thou maist of thy might,
 “ To freat inward for losing such a losse ?”

Wyat's Epitle to Poynes.

Anne magis Siculi gemuerunt æra juvenci,
 Aut magis, auratis pendens laquearibus, ensis
 Purpureas subter cervices terruit, *Imus*,
Imus præcipites ! quam si sibi dicat, et intus
 Palleat infelix, quod proxima nesciat uxor ?

Sæpe oculos (memini) tangebam parvus olivo,
 Grandia si nollem morituri verba Catonis
 Dicere, non sano multum laudanda magistro,

VER. 73. *Say, could the wretch, &c.*] Perillus, who, to gratify the savage cruelty of Phalaris, fabricated the brazen bull, and, as a just reward for his ingenuity, was condemned to make the first trial of its tortures. The "guest" mentioned in the next couplet was Damocles, an outrageous flatterer of Dionysius of Syracuse, who believed, or pretended to believe, like Vertigo in the play, that the sum of human happiness was comprised in regal state. The tyrant, (for all tyrants delight in practical jests,) to give him a convincing proof of it, caused him to be clothed in purple, and served with a magnificent banquet at his own table. So far all was admirable—but immediately over the head of the mock-monarch glittered a naked sword, suspended by a single hair. Damocles lost his appetite* at the sight, and, for a time, no doubt, enjoyed all the felicity of a real despot. These fables, it must be confessed, are a little trite ; but it is sometimes useful to notice them. The poet's application of his examples, is strikingly awful : it is to be lamented that Dryden should, through mere heedlessness, deprive his readers of all its advantages. "*Quod proxima nesciat uxor*," he renders—

* Rather his taste ;

"*Districtus ensis cui super impia*

"*Cervice pendet, non Siculæ dapes*

"*Dulcem elaborabunt saporem.*"——Hon.

Say, could the wretch severer tortures feel,
 Closed in the brazen bull?—Could the bright steel,
 That, while the board with regal pomp was spread,
 Gleam'd o'er the guest, suspended by a thread,
 Worse pangs inflict, than he endures, who cries,
 (As, on the rack of conscious guilt, he lies,)
 In mental agony, "Alas! I fall,
 Down, down the unfathom'd steep, without recal!"
 And withers at the heart, and dares not show
 His bosom wife, the secret of his woe!

Oft, (I remember yet,) my sight to spoil,
 Oft, when a boy, I blear'd my eyes with oil,
 What time I wish'd my studies to decline,
 Nor make great Cato's dying speeches mine;
 Speeches, my master to the skies had raised,
 Poor pedagogue! unknowing what he praised;

"Even in his sleep he starts, and fears the knife,

"And, trembling, in his arms takes his accomplice-wife!"

VER. 88. *Poor pedagogue! &c.*] The poet is not quite so complimentary; he calls him (*non sanus*) insane; which the pseudo-Cornutus, alarmed probably for the scholar's gratitude, explains by (*valde sanus*) full of wisdom! The truth is, that the unfortunate race of men who taught the rudiments of learning at Rome, were held in little esteem; and the humble labours of Orbilius, Ruffus, and the "bum-brusher" before us, were forgotten or ridiculed as fast as the youths escaped from their ferulas. The critics are not agreed upon the precise sense of *non sanus*. Marcilius thinks that it means *iracundus*; but the master of the text was a placid, good-natured soul. Koenig.

Quæ pater adductis sudans audiret amicis.

Jure etenim id summum, quid dexter Senio
ferret

Scire, erat in voto ; damnosa Canicula quantum
Raderet : angustæ collo non fallier orcæ :

says that it alludes to the absurdity of proposing such grave subjects to boys : while Sir W. Drummond refers it to the dogma of the Stoicks, who maintained all to be *non sani* that “ did not understand and practise their philosophy.” I am somewhat inclined to Madan's opinion, (notwithstanding the sarcastick manner in which it is noticed by Sir W. Drummond,) and believe that the speaker, proud of his superior knowledge, laughs at the weakness of his old master, who could be delighted with such fustian.

VER. 91. *For then, alas! &c.*] There is nothing more obscure than the nature of the Roman games of chance, except, perhaps, that of our own ancestors ; and the commentators who treat expressly on either, fall into perpetual inconsistencies. I know as little of the matter as the wisest of my predecessors ; and shall therefore hazard nothing beyond a simple explanation of the terms of the text. The Romans appear to have had two species of dice ; the *tessera*, (our dice), and the *talus*. It is of this Persius is supposed to speak ; so that the former may be dismissed. The *talus* was an oblong square, figured on the four sides : the numbers, which did not follow in succession, were the ace (*canis*, or as Persius terms it, *canicula*), the tray, (*ternio*) the cater, (*quaternio*) and the sice (*senio*.) The ace was always a losing cast, the sice a winning one : this is familiarly noticed by Isidorus, “ *Nisi parva felicitas tibi videtur vincere alea, et cum aliis in unionem (canem) evolvitur — tibi semper senionem emergere.*” lib. xviii. c. 66. They did not play with a pair of dice as we do, but with four. Suetonius has had the taste to preserve a letter of Augustus to Tiberius, where the good old

And which my sire, suspense 'twixt hope and fear,
With venial pride, had brought his friends to hear.

For then, alas ! 'twas my supreme delight
To study chances, and compute aright,
What sum the lucky Sice would yield in play,
And what the fatal Aces sweep away :—
Anxious, no rival candidate for fame
Should hit the long-neck'd jar with nicer aim ;

emperor talks with great complacency of the amusement which he found in this te-totum kind of business. "*Cænavi, mi Tiberi, cum iisdem. Accesserunt convivæ Vinicius et Silvius pater. Inter cænam lusimus γεγονίλων et heri et hodie. Talis enim jactatis, aut quisque canem aut senionem miserat, in singulos talos singulos denarios in medium conferebat : quos tollebat universos qui Venerem jecerat.*" lib. ii. c. 70. Here a single dice was thrown, and a denarius staked for each point ; the four tali were then put into the box, and the person who first threw *Venus*, that is sices, or, as some say, the four different numbers, swept the stakes.

VER. 96. *Should hit the long-neck'd jar, &c.*] This puerile sport appears to be an improved kind of *cherry-pit*, where the boys, instead of pitching nuts, &c. into a hole dug in the ground, pitched them into a jar. Holyday, however, who is closely followed by Dryden, and Brewster, takes the *orca*, with its "narrow neck," for a dice box : although the word occurs just below in the very sense which it evidently bears here,

"*Mænaque quod prima nondum defecerit orca.*"

But thus he gives it :

" Watch'd that my fellows did not put false play
" Upon me, neatly cogging forth a die
" Out of the small-neck'd casting box."—

Neu quis callidior buxum torquere flagello.

Haud tibi inexpertum curvos deprendere mores,
Quæque docet sapiens, braccatis inlita Medis,
Porticus ; insomnis quibus et detonsa juvenus
Invigilat, siliquis, et grandi pasta polenta.
Et tibi, quæ Samios diduxit littera ramos,

The note on this passage is worthy of the text. " They used (he says) to cast their dice out of boxes, as now adaises we doe out of small sawcers, [an odd illustration, by the way, of " a small-neck'd box,"] to prevent the sleight of the hand, which notwithstanding some more cunning gamesters did often practice." O bone ! these were school-boys. How did this distich escape the translator ?

" Vas quoque sæpe cavum spatio distante locatur

" In quod missa levis nux cadit una manu." *Nux.* v. 85.

VER. 99. *But you have pass'd the schools, &c.*] M. Raoul, who tells us that the whole of this, from *Magne pater*, &c. applies to Nero, makes assurance doubly sure by asking intrepidly, "*À quel autre que Néron peut-on appliquer ce qu'on lit ici-bas ?*"

Haud tibi inexpertum &c."

If the reader does not see this, M. Raoul is not disconcerted. It was necessary, he says, to escape the restless malice of the tyrant, and to be obscure, at the peril of life. This silences every objection.

VER. 101. *And what the Porch, &c.*] It is thus incidentally described by Corn. Nepos, in the life of Miltiades ; "*Huic (Milt.) talis honos tributus est in Porticu, quæ Pæcile vocatur, quum pugna depingeretur Marathonis ; ut in decem Prætorum numero, prima ejus imago poneretur.*" This Porch (Στοα) was painted by Mycon, and his more celebrated son, Polygnotus ; it formed the favourite retreat of Zeno, and the founders of the

Or, while the whirling top beguiled the eye,
With happier skill the sounding scourge apply.

But you have pass'd the schools ; have studied
long,
And learn'd the eternal bounds of Right and
Wrong ;

And what the Porch, (by Mycon limn'd, of yore,
With trowser'd Medes,) unfolds of ethick lore,
Where the shorn youth, on herbs and pottage fed,
Bend, o'er the midnight page, the sleepless head :
And, sure, the letter where, divergent wide,
The Samian branches shoot on either side,

Stoick philosophy, which took its distinctive appellation from this circumstance.

Persius, like Juvenal, uses *Mede*, as a generic term for the people under the sway of the Persian monarch : from the description of them, they appear to have worn pretty nearly the same dress at the battle of Marathon as at this day. The " painted porch " (*Pœcile*) long survived the age of Persius ; it was an object of veneration to the *budge doctors of the Stoick fur*, who appear to have made annual pilgrimages to it, so late as the fourth century ; when it was wantonly defaced by a Proconsul of Attica. It appears that, besides the fresco paintings, there were parts of the grand design painted on pannels (*σραυίδες*), by Polygnotus, and hung along the walls. These were torn down, according to Zosimus, by the Proconsul, just mentioned, whose name (and it is worth recording) was Antiochus. He was, as might be expected, a partisan of the Goths, to whom he opened the passes of Thermopylæ.

VER. 105. *And sure the letter, &c.*] The allusion is to the Greek hypsilon (Υ) selected by Pythagoras as the symbolical

Surgentem dextro monstravit limite callem.
 Stertis adhuc ? laxumque caput, compage soluta,
 Oscitat hesternum, dissutis undique malis !
 Est aliquid quo tendis, et in quod dirigis arcum ?
 An passim sequeris coryvos, testaque lutoque,
 Securus quò pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivis ?

Helleborum frustra, cum jam cutis ægra tu-
 mebit,
 Poscentes videas ; venienti occurrere morbo,
 Et quid opus Cratero magnos promittere montes ?

representative of human life : the early part, or that which passes before any distinct character is assumed, is typified by the trunk or stem, while the two branches prefigure the different and opposite routes of Virtue and Vice. The right hand branch, which was the finer drawn line of the two, leads, it seems, to Virtue, the other, to Vice. There is nothing very ingenious in the thought, for the philosopher's finger and thumb would have furnished quite as apt an illustration of his theory ; yet it took greatly with the Ancients. Persius alludes to it again in the fifth Satire, and it is thus noticed in the Virgiliana :

“ Litera Pythagoræ, discrimine secta bicorni,

“ Humanæ vitæ speciem præferre videtur.”

It is scarcely possible to notice this weak and imperfect symbol, without adverting to another, not necessary to be given here, in which all is congruent, impressive, and awfully instructive.

VER. 111. *And, stretching o'er your drowsy desk, &c.]* The philosophical preceptor here continues his reproach : the young gentleman was hardly yet awake, though seated so long since at his studies.

VER. 122. *And Craterus will boast no golden fees.]* It is curious to learn from the elder Pliny, that a physician in repute

Has to your view, with no obscure display,
Mark'd, on the right, the strait but better way.

And yet you slumber still ! and still oppress,
With last night's revels, knock your head and
breast !

And, stretching o'er your drowsy desk, produce
Yawn after yawn, as if your jaws were loose !
Is there no certain mark, at which to aim ?—
Still must your bow be bent at casual game ?
With clods, and potsherds, must you still pursue
Each wandering crow that chance presents to view ;
And, careless of your life's contracted span,
Live from the moment, and without a plan ?

When bloated dropsies every limb invade,
In vain to hellebore you fly for aid :
Meet, with preventive skill, the young disease,
And Craterus will boast no golden fees.

made nearly as much money by his practice, in Rome, as is now made by the most popular of the profession, with us : he notices several whose fees amounted to five or six thousand a year.

Craterus, like all the physicians in fashionable practice, was a Greek ; he is mentioned both by Cicero, and Horace, and said to have been physician to Augustus. There were practitioners at Rome, in the poet's age, whose credit, and whose fees were equal to those of Craterus, and whose name would therefore have furnished as apt an example : but Persius could never keep his thoughts, nor his fingers from Horace, whose Satire (lib. ii. sat. 3.) he must have had at this time before him.

Discite, ô miseri ! et causas cognoscite rerum :
 Quid sumus, et quidnam victuri gignimur ; ordo
 Quis datus, aut metæ quam mollis flexus, et undæ :
 Quis modus argento ; quid fas optare ; quid asper
 Utile nummus habet ; patriæ, carisque propinquis
 Quantum elargiri deceat : quem te Deus esse
 Jussit, et humana qua parte locatus es in re.
 Disce :—nec invidias, quod multa fidelia putet

VER. 123. *Mount, hapless youths, &c.*] In this section there is not much of novelty ; nor, indeed, is it to be looked for. Besides the Greek philosophers, the poet had in view Cicero, and, perhaps, Seneca. From the lib. *De Finibus*, in particular, he has drawn largely ; it is, however, due to him to add, that he has given a beautiful summary of the pure ethicks of his school, and expressed the sense of his eloquent but wordy masters, with admirable force and brevity.

Persius is here very much in earnest : his language is direct, and remarkably free from his besetting fault, harsh and overstrained metaphors. The only passage which creates any difficulty was, no doubt, plain to those for whom he wrote, and, perhaps, is come down to us in a corrupted state.—*Aut metæ quam mollis flexus, et undæ*, is variously read ; we have *qua* for *quam*, *unde* for *undæ*, &c. In this uncertainty, I have given what I conceive to be the general import of the words—except that tempestuous seas should, if the line admitted, rather be seas rendered perilous by rocks or quick-sands :—But the author evidently alludes to an actual contention, i. e. to a boat, or a chariot race. If *unde* be genuine, the passage would, perhaps, be more correctly rendered in this manner :

How best to take your station, whence to start,
 And where to turn the goal with nicest art.

Or,

How, in life's course, the wheels may safest roll,
 And scape the perils which beset the goal.

Mount, hapless youths! on Contemplation's
wings,
And mark the Causes and the End of things:—
Learn what we are, and for what purpose born,
What station here, 'tis given us to adorn;
How best to blend security with ease,
And win our way through life's tempestuous seas;
What bounds the love of property requires,
And what to wish, with unprov'd desires;
How far the genuine use of wealth extends;
And the just claims of country, kindred, friends;
What Heaven would have us be; and where our
stand,
In this GREAT WHOLE, is fix'd by High Command.
Learn these—and envy not the sordid gains,
Which recompense the well-tongued lawyer's
pains;

VER. 133. *What Heaven would have us be;]* *Quem te Deus esse Jussit, &c.* Holyday translates the passage thus:

“ Whom God hath made thee, and in what degree
“ And state of life, he here hath placed thee.”

On which he observes—“ Methinks these lines of mine author, and especially, his word *Deus*, seems to be of that high straine of Divinitie (in a heathen) which Plato reached unto, when he did professe that he writ but in jest, when he said *Gods*.

VER. 135. *Learn these—and envy not the sordid gains.]* “ Among all the Romans who were brought up to learning, (says Dryden, from Casaubon,) few besides the lawyers grew rich;” and he

In locuplete penu, defensis pinguibus Umbris;
 Et piper, et pernæ, Marsi monumenta clientis;
 Mænaque quod prima nondum defecerit orca.

Heic aliquis de gente hircosa centurionum
 Dicat, *Quod sapio, satis est mihi : non ego curo*
Esse quod Arcesilas, ærumnosique Solones,
Obstipo capite, et figentes lumine terram ;

is inclined to be severe on their rapacity. But Dryden did not recollect that all was changed since the days of Cicero. The Bar, which was then frequented by the principal men of the state, was now, in a great measure, abandoned to those who professed law as a regular occupation, and whose sole dependence was on their fees. They were chiefly taken in kind, (this appears also from Juvenal ; Sat. vii.) and seems little calculated to "enrich" any thing but a larder. A few splendid exemptions may undoubtedly be found : but generally speaking, the profession was not a gainful one.

VER. 145. *I laugh at all your dismal Solons, I ;*] There is another object of ridicule mentioned in the text—Arcesilas—the founder of the middle Academy. "*Or cet Arcesilas, tout habile qu'il étoit, avoit le défaut d'être fort peülant dans le dispute, et d'établir pour principe qu'on ne pouvoit rien savoir.*" It might perplex a plain-dealing man to account for such a person's disputing at all.—He was, however, a very subtle caviller ; and is therefore charged by Cicero with weakening the foundation of philosophy, and effecting in morals what the Gracchi attempted in politicks.

There is great humour in the intrepid and forthright ignorance of this noble captain, who is made to laugh at all practical as well as speculative knowledge. Hall has imitated, or rather translated the passage with considerable success, though he has somewhat blunted the edge of the satire by introducing names of his own. He was not aware, apparently, of the sly malice of the poet in his notice of Solon :

Though Umbrian rusticks, for his sage advice,
 Pour in their jars of fish, and oil, and spice,
 So thick and fast, that, ere the first be o'er,
 A second, and a third, are at the door.

But here, some brother of the blade, some coarse
 And shag-hair'd captain, bellows loud and hoarse ;

“ Away with this cramp, philosophick stuff !
 My learning serves my turn, and that's enough.

• I laugh at all your dismal Solons, I ;

Who stalk with downcast looks, and heads awry,

“ Tush ! what care I to be Arcesilas,
 “ Or some sad Solon whose deep-furrowed face,
 “ And sullen head, and yellow-clouded sight
 “ Still on the stedfast earth are musing pight ;
 “ Muttering what censures their distracted minde,
 “ Of brain-sicke paradoxes hath definde,
 “ Or of Parmenides or darke Heraclite,
 “ Whether all be one, or nought be infinite,” &c.

The impudent vivacity with which the captain opens his
 • harangue in Dryden, is exceedingly characteristick and amusing :

“ Tush ! I have sense to serve my turn, in store ;
 “ And he's a rascal who pretends to more :
 “ D—— me ! whate'er those book-learn'd blockheads say,
 “ Solon's the veriest fool in all the play !”

But there is a spirit in the text sufficient to quicken the
 slowest intellect. The manner too, in which this exquisite
 burst of camp eloquence is received by the delighted audience,
 the undoubting glee, and hearty contempt of the circle,

Varronum et rupicum squarrosa incondita rostra,

is fully equal to the rest of the picture.

Murmura cum secum, et rabiosa silentia rodunt,
 Atque exporrecto trutinantur verba labello,
 Ægroti veteris meditantés somnia, GIGNI
 DE NIHILO NIHILUM, IN NIHILUM NIL POSSE RE-
 VERTI.

Hoc est, quod palles ! cur quis non prandeat, hoc
 est !

His populus ridet, multumque torosa juvenus
 Ingeminat tremulos naso crispante cachinnos. ~~homo~~
 Inspice ; nescio quid trepidat mihi pectus, et
 ægris

Faucibus exsuperat gravis halitus ; inspicere, sodes,—
 Qui dicit medico, jussus requiescere, postquam
 Tertia compositas vidit nox currere venas,
 De majore domo modice sitiente lagena
 Lenia loturo sibi Surrentina rogavit.

VER. 147. *Muttering within themselves, &c.*] A similar expression occurs in the Anthology, in an old epigram attributed to Virgil :

“ ———— talia commeditantes
 “ Murmure concluso rabiosa silentia rodunt.”

VER. 151. *Nothing can come, &c.*]

“ ———— rem
 “ Nullam de nihilo gigni divinitus unquam.”

LUCRET. lib. i. 15.

VER. 168. *A moderate flask, &c.*] There is some pleasantry in *modice sitiente lagena*. It was not a pitcher as big as the Heidelberg tun ; but one of a tolerable, or middling size. Dryden seems to have seen this, for he translates it—

“ No sickly noggin, but a jolly jug.”

Muttering within themselves, where'er they roam,
 • And churning their mad silence, till it foam.
 Who mope o'er sick men's dreams, howe'er absurd,
 And on protruded lips poise every word ;
Nothing can come from nothing. Apt and plain !
Nothing return to nothing. Good, again !
 And this it is, for which they peak and pine !
 This precious stuff, for which they never dine !"
 • Jove, how he laughs ! the brawny youths around,
 Catch the contagion, and return the sound :
 Convulsive mirth on every cheek appears,
 And every nose is wrinkled into sneers.

" Doctor, a patient said, employ your art,
 I feel a strange wild fluttering at the heart ;
 My breast seems tighten'd, and a fetid smell
 Affects my breath ;—feel here ! all is not well."

Med'cine and rest the fever's rage compose,
 And, the third day, his blood more calmly flows :
 • The fourth, unable to contain, he sends
 A hasty message to his wealthier friends,
 And—" *just about to bathe*"—requests, in fine,
 A moderate flask of old Surrentin wine.

Whatever it was, however, it was filled, of course ; and the convalescent glutton drank it out—*Hinc subitæ mortes*, &c.

Surrentine wine, of a good quality, was not common ; hence, says Marcilius, the poet sends his servant to a great house (*majore domo*) for it. If Pliny may be trusted, it was well adapted to the occasion. "*Surrentina in vineis tantum nascentia,*

“Heus, bone ! tu palles.” Nihil est. “Videas
tamen istud,

Quicquid id est ; surgit tacitè tibi lutea pellis.”

At tu deterius palles ; ne sis mihi tutor :

Jampridem hunc sepeli ; tu restas ! “Perge ; ta-
cebo.”

Turgidus hic epulis, atque albo ventre, lavatur,
Gutturè sulphureas lente exhalante mephites.

Sed tremor inter vina subit, calidumque triental

Excudit e manibus ; dentes crepuere relecti ;

Uncta cadunt laxis tunc pulmentaria labris.

convalescentibus maxime probata propter tenuitatem, salubritatemque—Here seems to be a distinction between the cultivated grape, and that which grew without care, and of which probably the common drink of the people, *vin du pays*, was made. Yet he adds “*Tiberius dicebat, consentisse medicos, ut nobilitatem darent, alioquin esse generosum acetum.*” In which opinion he is supported by the judicious Caligula, who calls Surrentine wine *vappam nobilem*. Perhaps its qualities were improved by time ; for it was kept, Pliny adds, five or six and twenty years by people of taste. The curious reader who should now make a journey to Surrentum, for the purpose of enjoying this celebrated wine, would be sorely disappointed ; in return, he would find most excellent veal there ; the calves of this district (with reverence be it spoken) being in high repute among the Neapolitan cognoscenti.

VER. 169. —*what pallid looks are here ; &c.*] The translators give this line to the physician. I believe with Koenig, that it belongs to an acquaintance who accidentally falls in with the patient as he is tottering from the table to the bath, and who, justly alarmed at the complication of asthma and dropsy which he discovers in him, bluntly indeed, but kindly tries to

“ Good heavens ! my friend, what pallid looks
are here ;”

Pshaw, nonsense ! nought ! “ Yet still ’tis worth
your fear,

Nought tho’ it be :—the waters rise within,
And, though unnoticed, bloat your sallow skin.”

——And yours, still worse ! Whence springs this
freedom, tro’ ?

Are you, forsooth, my guardian ? Long ago,
I buried him ; and thought my nonage o’er :
But You remain to school me ! “ Sir, no more.”—

Now to the bath, full gorged with luscious fare,
See the pale wretch his bloated carcase bear ;
While from his lungs, that faintly play by fits,
His gasping throat sulphureous steam emits !—
Cold shiverings strike him, as for wine he calls,
His grasp betrays him, and the goblet falls ;
From his loose teeth, the lip, convuls’d, with-
draws,

And the rich eats drop through his listless jaws !—

persuade him to turn back. The petulance and ill-humour with which this kindness is received, are highly characteristick, and satirical. The dying wretch was too much in the wrong to bear good advice. Boileau has tried his skill on this passage, but with no great success :

“ Qu’avez vous ? Je n’ai rien. Mais—Je n’ai rien, vous dis-je,

“ Répondra ce malade, à se taire obstiné ;

“ Mais cependant voilà tout son corps gangrené,

Hinc tuba, candelæ : tandemque beatulus, alto
 Compositus lecto, crassisque lutatus amomis,
 In portam rigidos calces extendit : at illum
 Hesterni capite induto subiere Quirites.

“ Et la fièvre demain, se rendant la plus forte,
 “ Un benitier aux piés, va l’étendre à la porte.”

VER. 176. *Tu restas*, i. e. says M. Raoul, *tu restas sèpeliendus*; and he refers, appositely enough, to Horace—*nunc ego resto. Confice*. Dryden takes the expression in the same sense :

“ I have already buried two or three,
 “ And, Doctor, I may live to bury thee.”

This is witty, at least ; but I believe the meaning to be fairly given in the text.

VER. 185. *Then trumpets, torches, &c.*] The poet has shaken his description a little out of order : but it is nevertheless exceedingly sprightly and pleasant. Previously to the last ceremony, the corpse was washed, rubbed with unguents and perfumes, and laid, as the text describes it, upon an open bier. It was now that the trumpets and torches assembled, and the funeral procession began its march towards the pyre. Dryden and others take *porta* for the gate of the city, and give many fanciful reasons for pointing the feet of the dead towards it ; but the word is used here simply for the passage out of the house, the vestibule, in short ; and no better motive than a sense of decency need be adduced for the position of the body. In *portas extendere* is perfectly synonymous with *foras spectare*, which is found in Seneca, Epist. xii.

“ Adults (*Tornorupæus* says) were accompanied by torches, children by wax-lights.” He is therefore at a loss to discover why the “ adult of Persius should be carried forth *cum cereis*, as he is pleased to interpret *candelæ* : at length a passage in Seneca occurs to him, which put an end to his difficulties. “ *At mehercle istorum funera tanquam qui minimum vixerint, non ad*

Then trumpets, torches come, in solemn state ;
 And my fine youth, so confident of late,
 Stretch'd on a splendid bier, and essenced o'er,
 Lies, a stiff corpse, heels foremost, at the door.
 While Romans of a day, with cover'd head,
 Shoulder him to the pyre, and——all is said !

faces, sed ad cereos deducenda sunt." But the critick here mistakes the philosopher as he had before mistaken the poet. *Candela* is put for any inflammable matter ; and Seneca is not stating a fact, but suggesting a measure for the attainment of a moral purpose.

As the Roman funerals were frequently by night, a number of torches were carried to add to the pomp of the procession ; but torches were at all times necessary, for, after the pile had been fired, they were thrown into the flames to increase the conflagration, and hasten the consumption of the body. Children were not burned ; this accounts for their being taken to the grave with small tapers or wax-lights.

It perplexed me at first to discover why Sir W. Drummond supposed these *candelæ* to allude to the lamps placed in sepulchres.—But he had by him, it soon appeared, an elaborate and learned disquisition on " that species of fire which burns without consuming the combustible matter that supports it."

I had nearly overlooked the " Romans of a day." They were slaves just manumitted by the Will of the deceased, who claimed, according to custom, the honour of conveying the body of their benefactor to the grave. The cap (*pileum*) was the type of freedom ; they were not likely, therefore, to forget it ; and accordingly they are characterised by the poet, as appearing, *induto capite*, " with covered heads." " Romans of a day," is, after all, a very inadequate translation of *Hesterni Quirites* ; but the dry humour of this combination, simple as it appears, would require more than one line to do it justice.

“Tange, miser! venas, et pone in pectore dextram;

Nil calet hic: summosque pedes attinge manusque;

Non frigent.”—Visa est si forte pecunia, sive

Candida vicini subrisit molle puella,

Cor tibi rite salit? Positum est argente catino

Durum olus, et populi cribro decussa farina:

Tentemus fauces; tenero latet ulcus in ore

Putre, quod haud deceat plebeia radere beta!

Alges, cum excussit membris timor albus aristas:

Nunc, face supposita, fervescit sanguis, et ira

Scintillant oculi; dicisque, facisque, quod ipse

Non sani esse hominis non sanus juret Orestes.

VER. 191. *But why to me? &c.*] The conclusion of the satire is worked up with equal spirit and ingenuity. Drowsy as the poet's youthful companion (*unus comitum*) is represented, he is yet alert enough to discover, that he is somehow or other involved in the present apologue. As the preceptor, however, appears to him to labour under a considerable mistake, he prepares to set him right; and in a somewhat indignant tone (this is the import of *miser*,) affirms himself to be in no danger of “trumpets and torches,” as is falsely insinuated, for that his state of health is excellent. It is now that the philosopher sees his advantage, and turns upon the poor dreamer with the moral of his fable, which he enforces with all the poignancy of satire, and all the dignity of truth. The student can no longer mistake, for he is presented with an epitome of his most besetting vices, and, among the rest, that of ungovernable passion—of which he had furnished a tolerable specimen in the opening lines—

“ But why, to me ? Examine every part ;
My pulse :—and lay your finger on my heart,
You’ll find no fever ; touch my hands and feet,
A natural warmth, and nothing more, you’ll meet.”

’Tis well ! But if you light on gold by chance,
If a fair neighbour cast a sidelong glance,
Still will that pulse with equal calmness flow ;
And still that heart no fiercer throbbings know.

Try yet again. In a brown dish behold,
Coarse gritty bread, and coleworts stale and cold :
Now, prove your taste. Why those averted eyes ?
Hah ! I perceive :—a secret ulcer lies
Within that pamper’d mouth, too sore to bear
Th’untender grating of plebeian fare !

Where dwells this *natural warmth*, when danger’s
near,

And “ each particular hair ” starts up with fear ?
Or where resides it, when vindictive ire
Inflames the bosom ; when the veins run fire,
The reddening eye-balls glare ; and all you say,
And all you do, a mind so warp’d betray,
That mad Orestes, if the freaks he saw,
Would give you up at once, to chains and straw !

“ ———— turgescit vitrea bilis.

“ Finditur, Arcadiæ pecuaria rudere credas.”

SATIRE IV.

SATIRE IV.

Argument.

This Satire is founded on the first Alcibiades of Plato, and many of the expressions are closely copied from that celebrated dialogue. It naturally arranges itself under three heads; the first of which treats of the preposterous ambition of those who aspired to take the lead in State affairs, before they had learned the first principles of civil government. The second division, which is of singular merit, and possesses a rich vein of strong but appropriate humour, and acute reasoning, turns on the general neglect of self-examination, enforcing, at the same time, the necessity of moral purity, from the impossibility of escaping detection; and of restraining all wanton propensity to exaggerate the foibles of others, from its tendency to provoke severe recrimination on our own vices. The conclusion, or third part, reverts to the subject with which the Satire opens, and arraigns, in terms of indignant severity, the profligacy of the young nobility, and their sottish vanity in resting their claims to approbation on the judgment of a worthless rabble.

“ The commentators before Casaubon, (Dryden says) were ignorant of our author’s secret meaning; and thought he had only written against young noblemen in general, who were too forward in aspiring to publick magistracy: but this excellent scholiast has unravelled the whole mystery, and made it apparent that the sting of this Satyr was particularly aimed at Nero.”

Casaubon has sufficient merit of his own, and needs not therefore be complimented at the expense of others. The translator’s acquaintance “ with the commentators” was of a limited kind, or he might have known, that Casabon had been preceded by many in

"unravelling the mystery." Some of the French criticks attribute the "discovery" to Britannicus; but neither was he the fortunate person!—It may seem a little extraordinary, that the old scholiast, who commonly saw Nero in every character, should not have recognised him in that of Alcibiades: yet he speaks of the *Satire* as pointed, at those—*qui honoris cupidi supra modum ætatis suæ, publici moderaminis gubernacula quærunt suscipere.*

Sir. W. Drummond thinks, with Dryden, and the other translators, that Nero is the subject, and in a disquisition of great elegance, has instituted a parallel between this prince and Alcibiades. Though I have many doubts as to the confined nature of the *Satire*, I can have none as to the propriety of the critick's concluding remarks. "To read this *Satire*, may be useful to the young. It may help to correct petulance; it may serve to warn inexperience — From it the youthful statesman may learn that, even in remote times, and in small states, government was considered as a most difficult science: from it, too, the high-born libertine may see, that as the sphere in which he moves, is wide and brilliant, his conduct and character are in proportion conspicuous, and his follies ridiculous."

A. PERSII FLACCI

SATIRÆ.

[SAT. IV. V. 1—8.]

REM populi tractas ? (Barbatum hæc crede magistrum

Dicere, sorbitio tollit quem dira cicutæ.)

Quo fretus ? dic hoc, magni pupille Pericli !

Scilicet ingenium, et rerum prudentia velox
Ante pilos venit ; dicenda, tacendaque calles !

Ergo, ubi commota fervet plebecula bile,

Fert animus calidæ fecisse silentia turbæ

Majestate manus ; quid deinde loquère ? “ Qui-
rites,

VER. 3. *Whom hemlock, &c.*] The poet speaks of Socrates.
See Juvenal, Sat. xiii.

VER. 6. *Ward of great Pericles.*] Alcibiades lost his father while he was yet a child. He was committed to the care and guardianship of Ariphon and Pericles ; the latter of whom took him into his own house, and discharged his trust with great fidelity. Both these great men were his relations. The pseudo-Cornutus tells us that Pericles was his uncle : it appears, however, from Cornelius Nepos, that he was his step-father.

SATIRES

OF

PERSIUS.

SAT. IV. V. 1.—14.]

WHAT! You, my Alcibiades, aspire
To sway the state!—(Suppose that bearded sire,
Whom hemlock from a thankless world remov'd,
Thus to address the stripling that he lov'd.)—
On what apt talents for a charge so high,
Ward of great Pericles, do you rely?
Forecast on others by gray hairs conferr'd,
Haply, with you, anticipates the beard;
And prompts you, prescient of the publick weal,
Now to disclose your thoughts, and now conceal!
Hence, when the rabble form some daring plan,
And factious murmurs spread from man to man,
Mute and attentive you can bid them stand,
By the majestick wafture of your hand!

“Educatus est in domo Periclis, (privignus enim ejus fuisse dicitur,) eruditus a Socrate.”

Hoc, puto, non justum est ;—illud, male ;—rectius
illud.”—

Scis etenim justum gemina suspendere lance
Ancipitis libræ ; rectum discernis, ubi inter
Curva subit, vel cum fallit pede regula varo :
Et potis es nigrum vitio præfigere Theta.

VER. 17. *Romans ! I think—&c.*] Père Jouvenci, who had marked this passage, honestly confesses that he cannot comprehend how Alcibiades could harangue the Romans in an assembly of Grecians ! he is therefore inclined to believe (he says,) that *Quirites* is catachrestically used for *Athenienses*. “Catachrestically,” indeed ! In truth, it must appear very strange to those who have not adverted to the little care which Persius takes to preserve the *keeping* of his plot, that the first word uttered by Alcibiades should be one which by no possibility could come out of his mouth. Instead of attributing this absurdity to a want of taste or judgment in the writer, the commentators are eager to discover in it, what Polonius terms a *fetch of warrant*. Thus M. Monier : “*Il est visible que Perse met ce mot dans la bouche d'un Grec, exprès pour faire sentir aux Romains que c'est eux qu'il veut désigner !*” This compassionate condescension to the obtuseness of his readers is a beautiful feature in the character of the poet ; and we have so many proofs of it in this Satire (such as, *Cures, puteal*, &c.) that if any one rises from it in the persuasion that he has been listening to Socrates and Alcibiades at Athens all the while, he cannot justly charge the illusion on the author.

VER. 20. *In the nice, trembling scale, &c.*] Here is a cluster of figurative expressions, of which the purport may be more easily guessed at than explained. The properties seem to be taken from the balance, the plummet, and the rule or square, a more complicated instrument, apparently, than that in use amongst

Lo! all is hush'd: what now, what will he
speak!

What floods of sense from that charg'd bosom
break!

“Romans! I think—I fear—I think, I say,
This is not well:—perhaps, the better way”—

O power of eloquence! But you, forsooth,
In the nice, trembling scale can poise the truth,
With even hand; can with intentive view,
Amidst deflecting curves, the right pursue;
Or, where the rule deceives the vulgar eye
With its warp'd foot, th' unerring line apply:
And, while your sentence strikes with doom pre-
cise,

Stamp the black Theta on the front of vice!

us. The reference of these intractable terms to the equable distribution of justice, to the clear discernment of the right between perplexing and opposite claims; and to the application of some corrective principle when the strict observance of the letter of the law (*regula*) would lead to a violation of its spirit, (all which the poet evidently has in view,) must be left to the reader. I have supplied him, to the best of my ability, with the original phraseology, at the expense of some harshness; conceiving that he might be better pleased to exercise his ingenuity, than to peruse a smooth paraphrase of a most obvious topick.

In the concluding line of this paragraph, Persius returns pretty nearly to the language of common life. To affix the theta Θ, is to condemn. It is the first letter of Θάνατος, (death) and was probably set against the names of those sentenced to

Quin tu igitur, summa nequicquam pelle decorus,
 Ante diem blando caudam jactare popello
 Desinis, Anticyras melior sorbere meracas?

Quæ tibi summa boni est?—"Uncta vixisse patella

Semper, et assiduo curata cuticula sole."

Expecta: haud aliud respondeat hæc anus. I nunc.

"Dinomaches ego sum; suffla: sum candidus."

Esto,

Dum ne deterius sapiat pannucea Baucis,

Cum bene discincto cantaverit ocyma vernæ.

capital punishment; this, at least, seems implied in the following passage:

"Nosti mortiferum quæstoris, Castrice, signum?

"Est operæ pretium discere theta novum," &c.

Mart. lib. vii. 37.

VER. 32. *Whole isles of hellebore,*] *Meracas Anticyras.* Anticyra was a maritime city, or as Ainsworth says, an isle in the Malian Gulph. It was fertile in hellebore, and, if the ancient satirists may be trusted, drove a thriving trade in this valuable drug, which was in great request. Some skill, however, was necessary in the administering of it; for its effects were very capricious. A small dose, a single draught, (*sorbitio*), would cure a patient labouring, like Socrates, under a complication of wisdom and virtue; whereas two Anticyras, we see, were required to remove the symptoms of youthful presumption; and Horace mentions a deplorable case of poetry, where three were found insufficient—"tribus Anticyris caput insanabile!"—The last two complaints are still very prevalent; and it is truly melancholy to think, that no specifick can be discovered for them either in nature or art.

Rash youth ! relying on a specious skin,
 While all is dark deformity within,
 Check the fond thought ; nor, like the peacock,
 proud,
 Spread your gay plumage to the applauding crowd,
 Before your hour arrive :—ah, rather drain
 Whole isles of hellebore, to cool your brain !
 For, what is YOUR chief good ? “ To heap my
 board

With every dainty earth and sea afford ;
 To bathe, and bask me in the sunny ray,
 And doze the careless hours of life away.”—

Hold, hold ! yon tatter’d beldame, hobbling by,
 If haply ask’d, would make the same reply.
 “ But, I am nobly born.” Agreed. “ And fair.’
 ’Tis granted too : yet goody Baucis there,
 Who, to the looser slaves, her pot-herbs cries,
 Is just as philosophick, just as wise !—

VER. 41. *Who, to the looser slaves, &c.] Cum bene discincto cantaverit ocyma vernæ.* “ In this place,” (says Holyday, and he says very truly) “ plentiful is the phansie of interpreters. First, some would have the word *ocymum*, here to signifie an unprofitable herb,—and so would have it be used as a reproach to an unprofitable servant ! 2dly. Some think that *ocymum*, called so from the quickness of it in growing, implies the upbraiding of a servant with his sloath.”—This, as Michael Cassio observes, is a better song than the other.—“ 3rdly. Others take it to signify basil, which some tell us was anciently sowed with *cursing*, and thus to imply the woman’s railing at an evil servant. 4thly. Some think that *ocymum* being the same with *basilicum*,

Ut nemo in sese tentat descendere ! nemo !
 Sed præcedenti spectatur mantica tergo.
 Quæsieris.—Nostin' Vectidi prædia ? “Cujus ?”
 Dives arat Curibus, quantum non milvus oberret.

which signifies kingly or lordly, was for *this* cause a word odious to servants, as upbraiding them with their servitude !” —There are yet three reasons to come ; but the reader will probably think that he has already had four too many. The secret of all this nonsense (and Holyday's collections form but a very small part of it) is, that Persius, being usually regarded as an obscure author, the criticks have persuaded themselves that his words can never have a simple meaning ; and, indeed, it is not a little amusing to see one of them, after sedulously toiling to perplex the sense of a plain passage, put himself into a heat, and absolutely quarrel with the poet for the trouble which he has taken ! “*Vraiment*” he concludes, the world has a just right to complain “*d'un poete dont il faut étudier le vers comme on médite un théorème de géométrie.*” In any other writer the line in question would have passed without observation ; and, in fact, one more plain and direct could not easily be found. *Ocy-ma* or *ocima* is used in the general sense of *olera*, for culinary vegetables, and *cantare* is the appropriate word for crying or offering them to sale. The Italians have no other at this day :

“ ————— quella

“ Alto cantando ai dissoluti servi

“ L'erbette,”——

is the version of Stelluti ; and that of Silvestri agrees with it.

The *verna*, or home-bred slave was, as has been already observed, (Juv. Sat. ix.) the *enfant gâté* of the family, rude, petulant, and dissolute ; this is the meaning of *discinctus* : and the whole argument runs thus. Your high pretensions (Persius says to the young statesman) savour more of folly and insanity than of true wisdom : but, to put the matter to the test,—what is your idea of the sovereign good, the great end of life ? The answer is honest, at least. To indulge in idleness, and to

How few, alas! their proper faults explore!
 While, on his loaded back, who walks before,
 Each eye is fix'd :—You touch a stranger's arm,
 And ask him, if he knows Vectidius' farm?
 " Whose," he replies? That rich old chuff's,
 whose ground
 Would tire a hawk to wheel it fairly round.

fare well. That, retorts the poet, is precisely what this poor old herb-woman would reply. And the observation is just and pertinent. The Baucises who cry radishes and water-cresses in our streets, have little conception of any happiness that is not connected with the table, and freedom from labour of every kind.

Having given his illustration, the poet leaves the reader to form his estimate of the practical knowledge of this young pretender to state affairs,—who now urges other claims, such as birth, beauty, &c. in which he has decidedly the advantage of the old woman: but our stoick treats them with silent contempt, and changes the subject.

Plato has shown more delicacy and tenderness for Alcibiades, than his imitator has for the Roman youth. Instead of confuting his vanity by the agency of an ignorant vender of pot-herbs, he introduces Amastris, the widow of Xerxes, whose language is grave and dignified, and tempts one to regret that she had not thought of it some years before, and tried its efficacy on her husband.

VER. 43. *How few, alas, &c.*] An allusion to the well known fable of Æsop, of Phædrus, and of every body,

" Peras imposuit Jupiter nobis duas.

Propriis repletam vitiis post tergum dedit,

Alienis ante pectus suspendit gravem.

Hac re videre nostra mala non possumus ;

Alii simul delinquant, censores sumus."

“Hunc ! ais ? hunc, Diis iratis Genioque sinistro !
 Qui, quandoque jugum pertusa ad compita figit,
 Seriolæ veterem metuens deradere limum,
 Ingemit, Hoc bene sit ! tunicatum cum sale mor-
 dens

Cæpe ; et, farrata pueris plaudentibus olla,
 Pannosam fæcem morientis sorbet aceti.”

✓ At si unctus cesses, et figas in cute solem,
 Est prope te ignotus, cubito qui tangat, et acre
 Despuat in mores :—penemque arcanaque lumbi
 Runcantem, populo marcentes pandere vulvas.
 Tu cum maxillis balanatum gausape pectas,
 Inguinibus quare detonsus gurgulio exstat ?

VER. 49. *O, ho ! that wretch, &c.*] There is a malicious pleasure shown by the speaker at the sudden recognition of Vectidius, and the opportunity thus afforded of calumniating him, *Hunc, ais ! Hunc!*—This I have endeavoured to express :—but who can do full justice to the lively caricature of Avarice which follows ?

The festival mentioned in the next line, was one of great celebrity ; a kind of rustick Saturnalia. It was held after the seed-season, on a day annually named by the prætor, but generally on or about the second of January. On the morning of this day, the peasantry assembled near the cross-roads, probably for the advantage of space : here they erected a tree somewhat in the manner of our may-poles, (while may-poles were found among us) on which the idle plough was hung, or, as some say, broken up—but as the Romans were advanced in civilization beyond the savages of Louisiana, and could not but know that it might be wanted again, this is rather questionable. Under this tree some slight shed appears to have

“ O, ho ! that wretch, on whose devoted head,
 Ill stars and angry gods their rage have shed !
 Who, on high festivals, when all is glee,
 And the loose yoke hangs idly on the tree,
 As, from the jar, he scrapes the incrusted clay,
 Groans o’er the revels of so dear a day ;
 Champs on a coated onion dipt in brine ;
 And, while his hungry hinds exulting dine
 On barley-broth, sucks up, with thrifty care,
 The mothery dregs of his pall’d vinegar !”

But, if “ you bask you in the sunny ray,
 And doze the careless hours of youth away,”
 There are, who at such gross delights will spurn,
 And spit their venom on your life, in turn ;
 Expose, with eager hate, your low desires,
 Your secret passions, and unhallow’d fires.—
 “ Why, while the beard is nurs’d with every art,
 Those anxious pains to bare the shameful part ?

been raised, where they sacrificed, feasted, and gave themselves up to riotous mirth and jollity.

The origin of this festival, which was probably, at first, an expression of pious gratitude, is lost in antiquity. The Roman writers refer it to one of their kings, according to custom ; and as a god was also necessary, they fixed upon the Lares, who, like Autolycus, were great *snappers up of unconsidered trifles* ; and the solemnity was therefore consecrated to the honour of the *Lares compitalitii*.

VER. 65. *Why, while the beard, &c.*] “ I can find” (Dryden says) “ no authority in history for charging these vices on

Quinque palæstritæ licet hæc plantaria vellant,
 Elixasque nates labefactent forcipe adunca,
 Non tamen ista filix ullo mansuescit aratro.

Cædimus, inque vicem præbemus crura sagittis.
 Vivitur hoc pacto : sic novimus. Ilia subter
 Cæcum vulnus habes ; sed lato balteus auro
 Prætegit. Ut mavis, da verba ; et decipe nervos,

Nero ; but Persius wished to cast a veil over his true meaning." This also is the opinion of Burton and others, who discover this unfortunate prince in every line.

It appears not a little extraordinary that none of the commentators should ever condescend to examine whether the Nero with whom Persius was acquainted is precisely the same person, who is known to us under that name. In truth, they seem afraid to approach him too closely, lest they should *not* find him the Ogre of their imagination.

When our poet wrote this, (apparently among the earliest of his satires,) he was a very young man ; Nero was still younger. The beginning of his reign was not worse than that of most of those who had gone before him—this, to be sure, is no great praise—perhaps, it was better : at all events this wretched prince did not break out into any gross enormities till the concluding year of Persius's life ; and the most atrocious of his crimes were committed long after the poet was in his grave. It is therefore the worst of trifling, (as has been more than once observed) to hunt him thus from page to page, and see him in every vicious character incidentally mentioned.

But, leaving this, the criticks just alluded to do not seem to be aware of the poet's drift in this part of his Satire. He neither charges Nero, nor any other person, with the actual commission of the excesses here mentioned. His object is to recommend a charitable construction of our neighbour's actions. Vectidius was probably nothing worse than a frugal, thrifty man ; yet he

In vain : should five athletick knaves essay,
 To pluck, with ceaseless care, the weeds away,
 Still the rank fern, congenial to the soil,
 Would spread luxuriant, and defeat their toil !"

Misled by rage, our bodies we expose,
 And while we give, forget to ward, the blows ;
 This, this is life ! and thus our faults are shown,
 By mutual spleen : we know—and we are known.

But your defects elude inquiring eyes !—
 Beneath thè groin the ulcerous evil lies,
 Impervious to the view ; and o'er the wound,
 The broad effulgence of the zone is bound !
 But can you, thus, the inward pang restrain,
 Thus, cheat the sense of languor and of pain ?

is represented as the most sordid of misers : the young nobility were indolent and luxurious ; and the same witty malice, the same wanton propensity to scandal which had so extravagantly caricatured the peasant, converts their culpable indulgences into the most frightful licentiousness. The application follows naturally, *Cædimus, inque vicem*, &c. Thus all is consistent.

There is a small prose translation of Persius, published somewhat more than a century ago, by a Mr. Eelbeck, " school-master in the little Ambrey, Westminster ;" and which the AUTHOR (as he proudly designates himself) conceives " will not only be useful to our inferior schools, but also to the Universities themselves." *Tu cum maxillis*, &c. is thus rendered by him, with a little assistance from Holyday : " When thou comb'st thy peruke oiled and pulverized around thy phyzz, where dost thou too unjustly appear smooth ? but scrape on."—The motto to this tiny volume is, *Nil mortalibus arduum est !* and the preface is really amusing. The poor man, whose name never

Si potes! “Egregium cum me vicinia dicat,
Non credam?” Viso si palles, improbe, nummo;
Si facis, in penem quicquid tibi venit amarum,
Si Puteal multa cautus vibice flagellas;

reached, perhaps, beyond the lane in which he lived, and who has not a line of tolerable English in all his work, firmly believed, like the rest of us, that he was about to produce *la huitième merveille* of the world. “Seeing,” he says, “a great many unprofitable tracts abroad, I thought it *highly expedient* for me to give some solid and useful proof of my qualifications. What beauty and artifice is in every word of these crabbed satires, my readers will easily discover from my translation; which is so just, so accurate, and so judiciously performed, as I don’t doubt but that I shall hear them own it to be one of the most useful books of its kind in *all their Libraries*.” When I call to mind that I found this notable performance (where, indeed, every thing is to be found) in the *Library* of my friend, Mr. Heber, it is hardly possible to suppress a smile.

VER. 85. *Or, bent on outrage, &c.*] The criticks maintain that Nero is the person here meant; and, indeed, the vices in the preceding couplet, rapacity and lust, may be fixed upon him without injustice: the next charge (if simply understood) applies still more directly to him: but simplicity will not serve the turn, and therefore he must be taxed with a fault that can by no possibility belong to him.

The *Puteal* was a small inclosure in the most frequented part of the Forum; it contained a low-raised piece of masonry, and appears to have been sometimes used as an altar.* When, or

* Literally *Puteal* is the cover of a well; though the word was occasionally used for the well itself; that is, whenever it was enclosed, or set apart for ceremonial purposes. The ancients bestowed great pains on these covers, many of which are still to be found in Greece, beautified with exquisite sculpture.

“ But if the people call me wise and just,
Sure, I may take the general voice on trust !”—

No :—If you tremble at the sight of gold ;
Indulge lust’s wildest sallies uncontroll’d ;
Or, bent on outrage, at the midnight hour,
Girt with a ruffian band, the Forum scour ;

why, it was railed in, was a matter of uncertainty even in Cicero’s time. He supposed that the famous razor and whetstone of the augur Nevius had been deposited there ; others thought that lightning had once fallen upon the spot, and that it was a kind of bidental. But whatever was the cause, a portion of superstitious regard attached to it. In its immediate vicinity the Prætor sat for the dispatch of publick business ; and round it were placed the tables of the money-changers, and perhaps those of other professions, notaries, &c. Thus the word was used for the tribunal of justice, for the resort of usurers, and generally, for the Forum itself. The line may be thus verbally rendered. If, secure yourself, you scourge the Forum with many stripes. Nothing can be more characteristic of the mad and mischievous disposition of Nero and the young nobility than this trait. In the notes to the third Satire of Juvenal, a detailed narrative may be found of these midnight riots. In one of them Nero was wounded, on which account he was afterward supported by a gang of desperate ruffians, and thus enabled to commit his outrages with impunity. His example was followed by the licentious youth of Rome, and the capital, as Tacitus says, resembled, at night, a city taken by storm. It appears that these “ night-brawlers” flew at high game : and, in the words of the historian, insulted men of rank, and women of the first condition.

That the sense of this disputed verse is such as is here given, I am well persuaded : indeed the passage in Tacitus would, of itself, lead to this explanation. “ *Cautus*,” (here is the poet’s

Nequicquam populo bibulas donaveris aures.

Respue quod non es : tollat sua munera cerdo :
Tecum habita ; noris quam sit tibi curta supellex.

word) “ *enim deinceps, et metuentius in posterum Nero, milites sibi et plerosque gladiatorum circumdederat.*” And he expressly mentions the Forum as the scene of those enormities.

But this, as has been already observed, was too plain and forthright a meaning for the commentators. They could not perceive that the agitated feeling which accompanies the eager desire of wealth, as here described, does not belong to the miser, who is cold, cautious, and calculating ; or that, if it did, Persius must be the blindest of poets, to blunder thus out of the way, and dislocate his sentence for the mere sake of shewing how awkward he could be : and accordingly, the pseudo-Cornutus thus opens the mystick sense. “ *Puteal vicus est apud Urbem ubi feneratoribus debitoribus pecuniam credebant. Vibice, dixit cicatrices αλληγορικῶς, quod feneratoribus suis usuras innodantes, tanquam vulnere in eis cicatrices aperiant. Flagellas dixit i. e. ad exigendum eos commoves.*” This is eagerly adopted by Ascensius, Britannicus, and all the commentators collected in the huge folio of Frobenius : but as they merely copy one another in succession, and add nothing to the happy thought of the old scholiast, it is sufficient to mention them ;

Then, wretch ! in vain the voice of praise you hear,
And drink the vulgar shout with greedy ear.

Hence, with your spurious claims ! rejudge your
cause,

And fling the rabble back their vile applause :
To your own breast, in quest of worth, repair,
And blush to find—how poor a stock is there !

unless it be worth noticing, that he is not chargeable with the gross absurdity into which they have all fallen. He attributes no part of this Satire to Nero—a remarkable circumstance—whereas they declare it to be expressly pointed at him, and, in particular, the passage—*At si unctus cesses*, &c.

Koenig, as might be expected, follows the Basle critics ; as do some of our translators :—but it is time to draw to a close. “ *Puteal*, then, (as they will needs have it,) means a usurer ; *vibex* a thong, and *flagello*, either to tie, or, by a trifling stretch of the sense, to take a bond of security !” or better still, according to Sheridan, “ *puteal* may signify a chest, and *flagello* the act of cording it !” Thus, Nero turns out to be a wary money-lender ! and thus—all sense is confounded, and all consistency destroyed !

SATIRE V.

SATIRE V.

Argument.

The poetical and philosophical claims of Persius rest, in some measure, upon this poem ; and it is but justice to say that they are not ill supported by it.

The Satire consists of two parts ; the first of which is appropriated to the expression of the poet's deep and grateful sense of the kindness of his friend and instructor, Cornutus, and a beautiful summary of the blessings which he has derived from his wisdom and goodness. The second part consists of a laboured and ostentatious display of his proficiency in the esoterick doctrine of the Stoick school, in which something must be forgiven to the ardour of youth, and the vehemency of inexperienced virtue. This division of the Satire is principally occupied with that celebrated paradox of his sect, that the wise man alone was essentially free ; and that the passions of avarice, ambition, luxury, superstition, &c. exercised as despotick a control over their victims as the severest task-master over his slaves.

It cannot be supposed that much new matter should be produced under this head. In fact, both Persius and his preceptor came too late for such a purpose ; and could only repeat, in other forms, what had been said a thousand times before. But there may be ingenuity where there is no novelty ; and this is not wanting.

Some amusement may be found in contrasting the sober earnestness of Persius with the solemn irony of Horace. The language of both is much the same, and the conclusions do not greatly differ : but the Stertinius of the latter, in spite of his inflexible gravity, must have been heard αὐτῆς γελῶν ; while the youthful poet com-

mands respect, and, though he may fail to convince, always secures attention.

A very pleasing part of Dryden's work, is the affectionate gratitude with which, in imitation of his author, he inscribes the translation of this Satire to his old master, Dr. Busby, "at the distance (he says) of forty-two years from the time when he departed from his tuition."

A. PERSII FLACCI

SATIRÆ.

AD ANNÆUM CORNUTUM.

[SAT. V. V. 1—5.]

VATIBUS hic mos est, centum sibi poscere voces,
centum ora, et linguas optare in carmina centum ;

Fabula seu mœsto ponatur hianda tragædo,
Vulnera seu Parthi ducentis ab inguine ferrum.

“ Quorsum hæc ? aut quantas robusti carminis offas

VER. 4. *Vulnera seu Parthi ducentis ab inguine ferrum,*] Casaubon supposes that this graphic line describes the manner in which the Parthian discharged his arrow, from the upper part of the thigh. But the Parthian in his flight (which is what the poet had in view) drew his bow over the left shoulder ; and the wound which is received, not given by him, is inflicted by the lance of the pursuing Roman. Persius had Horace in his thoughts :

“ Aut labentis equo describit vulnera Parthi.”

VER. 1. *Poets are wont, &c.*] An allusion to Virgil—who, whenever he copies the hyperboles of Homer, is seldom satis-

SATIRES

OF

PERSIUS.

TO ANNÆUS CORNUTUS.

SAT. V. V. 1—8.]

PERSIUS.

POETS are wont a hundred mouths to ask,
A hundred tongues,—whate'er the purposed task—
Whether a Tragick tale of Pelops' line,
For the sad actor, with deep-mouth, to whine ;
Or Epick lay ; the Parthian wing'd with fear,
And wrenching from his groin the Roman spear.

CORNUTUS.

Heavens ! to what purpose, (sure, I heard thee
wrong,)

Tend those huge gobbets of robustious song,

fied without adding to their extravagance. The old bard was content with ten mouths and ten tongues : his moderation has been overlooked ; and, in spite of the ridicule of Persius, none of his followers, from Statius to Tasso inclusive, think of asking for less than a hundred of each :—

“ Non io se cento bocche, e lingue cento

“ Havessi, e ferrea lena e ferrea voce,” &c.

Ingeris, ut par sit centeno gutture niti?
 Grande locuturi, nebulas Helicone legunto;
 Si quibus aut Prognēs, aut si quibus olla Thyestæ
 Fervebit, sæpe insulso cœnanda Glyconi.
 Tu neque anhelanti, coquitur dum massa camino,
 Folle premis ventos; nec clauso murmure raucus
 Nescio quid tecum grave cornicaris inepte;
 Nec stloppo tumidas intendis rumpere buccas.
 Verba togæ sequeris, junctura callidus acri,

VER. 15. *Dull Glyco's feast!*] The theatrical taste of the Romans must have greatly degenerated, if the abominable banquets mentioned in the text were allowed to be openly served. Horace had long before reprobated such disgusting exhibitions; and, indeed, it is pretty certain that nothing of the kind obtained favour in his time:

“Nec pueros coram populo Medea trucidet,
 “Aut humana palam coquat exta nefarius Atreus,
 “Aut in avem Progne vertatur,” &c.

It seems probable that subsequently the national theatre was, in some measure, abandoned to the populace; and that the actors were held in little esteem. Their merits appear not to have been above their characters. From the parts played by Glyco (Thyestes and Pandion) he must have been *primo-tragico*; yet Persius calls him a simpleton; and Juvenal, in his description of Cerinthus, another prime actor, is not more respectful in his language.

The pseudo-Cornutus tells us that this person was much admired by Nero, who purchased his freedom at a considerable price. The approbation of so discerning a judge is greatly in Glyco's favour: but, adds the scholiast, (who favours us with a portrait of the actor, which might pass at this day for a flattering likeness of Mr. Romeo Coates)—*nescius jocari, propter*

Which, struggling into day, distend thy lungs,
And need a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues?

Let fustian bards to Helicon repair,
And suck the spongy fogs that hover there,
Bards, in whose fervid brains, while sense recoils,
The pot of Progne. or Thyestes boils,
Dull Glyco's feast!—But what canst thou propose?
Puff'd by thy heaving lungs, no metal glows;
Nor dost thou, mumbling o'er some close-pent
strain,
Croak the grave nothings of an idle brain;
Nor swell, until thy cheeks, with thundering sound,
Displode, and spirt their airy froth around.

Confined to common life, thy numbers flow,
And neither soar too high, nor sink too low:

quod eum insulsum dixit Persius. It is to be hoped that the poet had a better reason for his satire; he scarcely expected a tragedian to joke, or looked for much facetiousness in the character of Thyestes. On, *cænanda*, Casaubon observes, *cænare htc est agere fabulam cupiditate cænæ*; and hence he accounts for the introduction of *sæpe*: this had been said before by Stel-luti, and was not worth repeating. The satire is not directed against Glyco, but the audience, who could bear the frequent repetition of such unnatural exhibitions.

VER. 21. *Confined to common life,*] “Some,” says M. Raoul, “translate the words *verba togæ* by pacifick, (as opposed to a state of war,) which I should think very strange, if it were not supported by great authorities.” These great authorities are Monti and Dryden, the former of whom renders it thus: “*A pacato parlar*

Ore teres modico ; pallentes radere mores
 Doctus, et ingenuo culpam defigere ludo.
 Hinc trahe, quæ dicas ; mensasque relinque My-
 cenis,

Cum capite et pedibus : plebeiaque prandia nôris."

Non equidem hoc studeo, bullatis ut mihi nugis
 Pagina turgescat, dare pondus idonea fumo.
 Secreti loquimur : tibi nunc, hortante Camena,
 Executienda damus præcordia ; quantaque nostræ
 Pars tua sit, Cornute, animæ, tibi, dulcis amice !

tu drizzi il telo" ; which is poor enough : and the latter, " the sweet accents of the peaceful gown." M. Raoul's own translation is far more to the purpose than either :

" Simple dans votre style, et d'un goût délicat."

It is to the credit of Madan that he appears rather startled at ~~this~~ description of his manner, which, with some little strain to ~~his~~ modesty, Persius has put into the mouth of his preceptor. " Query," (he says,) " if this be not going somewhat too far ?" —In truth, it would be difficult to find in the whole of these Satires any specimen which, at first sight, seems more remote from our notions of the *verba togæ*, the vernacular language, than the very passage in which the author professes to have formed his style in strict conformity to the modes of speech established among the better educated portion of his contemporaries. Yet it is scarcely possible to believe, that a man possessed of the smallest portion of common sense, would expose himself by stumbling at the outset, and contradicting his own pretensions by the very terms in which those pretensions were asserted—to say nothing of his making the person to whom his poem was addressed, advance an opinion of which he did not know him to be fully persuaded. I am happily spared the

There strength and ease in graceful union meet,
 Though polish'd, subtle, and though poignant,
 sweet ;

Yet powerful to abash the front of crime,
 And crimson error's cheek with sportive rhyme.

O still be this thy study, this thy care :
 Leave to Mycenæ's prince his horrid fare,
 His head and feet ; and seek, with Roman taste,
 For Roman food—a plain but pure repast.

PERSIUS.

Mistake me not. Far other thoughts engage
 My mind, Cornutus, than to swell my page
 With air-blown trifles, impotent and vain,
 And grace, with noisy pomp, an empty strain.
 Oh, no : the world shut out, 'tis my design,
 To open (prompted by the inspiring Nine)
 The close recesses of my breast, and bare
 To your keen eye, each thought, each feeling,
 there ;—

Yes, best of friends ! 'tis now my pride to own,
 How much that "breast" is fill'd with you alone !

labour of seeking to remove these difficulties, by the kindness of my friend Mr. Frere, whose ingenious and learned solution, which the reader will consult with equal profit and pleasure, will be found in the concluding pages of the Introduction.

VER. 28. *Leave to Mycenæ's prince, &c.*] He alludes to the *pot of Thyestes*, v. 14. The English reader may form a pretty competent notion of this tragedy from that exquisite counterpart of it, Titus Andronicus, as improved by Ravenscroft.

Ostendisse juvat : pulsa, dignoscere cautus
 Quid solidum crepet, et pictæ tectoria linguæ.
 His ego centenas ausim deprecere voces ;
 Ut, quantum mihi te sinuoso in pectore fixi,
 Voce traham pura ; totumque hoc verba resig-
 nent,
 Quod latet arcana non enarrabile fibra.

Cum primum pavidus custos mihi purpura cessit,
 Bullaque succinctis Laribus donata pependit ;

VER. 49. *When first I laid the purple by, &c.*] The sons of the nobility, and of the privileged citizens, wore the *toga prætexta* (a gown richly bordered with purple) till they reached the age of seventeen, when they exchanged it for the *toga virilis*, or manly gown, and entered into a state of comparative independence and liberty. Persius gives the epithet of *custos* to the purple, to shew, Madan says, “ that it was a kind of sacred preservative of youth.” He certainly did not find this in his author. The *prætexta*, if we may trust those who well knew what they said, was any thing but a preservative ; and the translator had but to turn back on his own work, to discover that *mores prætextati* were synonymous with habits of no common profligacy. *Custos*, in fact, refers to the domestick restrictions, which were taken off when the youth ranked with men.

VER. 51. ————— and on the *Lares hung*

The bulla, &c.] For the *bulla*, see Juvenal Sat. v. This was a private ceremony ; the putting on of the toga was a publick one : if the latter was performed at Rome, the youths repaired immediately afterwards to some temple, (generally to the Capitol,) to complete the ceremony, by offering the customary sacrifices. On the word *succinctis*, here applied to the *Lares*, the commentators have trifled not a little. The fact seems to be, that gold, which, as the poet tells us, had expelled

Ring then—for, to your practised ear, the sound
 Will shew the solid, and where guile is found
 Beneath the varnish'd tongue. For THIS, in fine,
 I dared to wish an hundred voices mine ;
 Proud to declare, how closely twined you dwell—
 How deeply fix'd in my heart's inmost cell,
 And paint, in words,—ah, could they paint the
 whole !—

The ineffable sensations of my soul.

When first I laid the purple by—and, free,
 Yet trembling at my new-felt liberty,
 Approach'd the hearth, and on the Lares hung
 The bulla, from my willing neck unstrung ;

the brass and earthen ware of Numa, and taken possession of the publick worship, had spared the family gods ; who, it is probable, were still represented in the same homely garb which they wore before Rome became a city. In truth, these domestic deities were rather looked upon as palladiums, amulets, or preservatives, than as “ gods of power ;” and a kind of affectionate home-bred superstition forbad all attempts at innovation on their COSTUME.—*Succinctus* is just such another word as *cinctutus*, which Horace applies to the early republicans, the Cethegi, &c. and which refers to the age of primitive simplicity. Holyday says that “ the Lares were called succinct, to signify their readinesse in defence of the house ;” and Madan describes them with all the warlike propensities of Juvenal's *desperate pigmies* : but they were a peaceable race.

VER. 54. *And the white boss, &c.] Candidus umbo.—This Holyday translates :*

Cum blandi comites, totaque impune Suburra
 Permisit sparsisse oculos jam candidus umbo ;
 Cumque iter ambiguum est, et vitæ nescius error
 Diducit trepidas ramosa in compita mentes,

“ When now my white shield granted libertie

“ Unto mine eies ;”—

and he is followed by Dryden, and Sir W. Drummond :

“ When the white shield by youthful warriors worn,

“ Through all the streets of Rome by me was born.”—

That the Roman youth were “ presented with shields without any device, when they arrived at the military age,” may possibly be true ; that they paraded with them “ through the streets of Rome,” is a random assertion, and directly in the face of all that we know of the Roman polity ; the march (had such a thing been attempted in a moment of insanity) would have been speedily arrested by the proper magistrates.

But while the translators are quoting Ferrarius *de re vestiaria*, and Rubenius, and a multitude of others who decide nothing, they lose sight of the characteristick habits of the people. The couplet last quoted from Sir W. Drummond, is followed by—

“ When, too, the martial dress forbad reproof.”—

Yet the dress which immediately succeeded the prætexta was the toga, so decidedly the dress of peace, as to be used by the best writers as emblematick of that state, and even synonymous with it.

There is one passage which the criticks have overlooked, which may be worth subjoining. It is from Apuleius.—“ *palla nigerrima, splendescens atro nitore, quæ circumcirca remeans, et sub dextrum lafus ad humerum lævum recurrens, umbonis vicem, dejecta parte laciniaë multiplici contabulatione dependula.*” On the words *umbonis vicem*, Beroaldus observes, “ *Sensus est Apuleianus, vestem recurrentem ad sinistrum representasse vicem umbonis, et scuti, sicut saepe pallium sinistrae involutum est pro clypeo.* Apud

When gay associates, sporting at my side,
 And the white boss, display'd with conscious pride,
 Gave me, uncheck'd, the haunts of vice to trace,
 And throw my wandering eyes on every face ;
 When life's perplexing maze before me lay,
 And error, heedless of the better way,
 To straggling paths, far from the route of truth,
 Woo'd, with blind confidence, my timorous youth,

Persium Candidus umbo non accipi debet pro clypeo, ut incuriosi et male literati opinantur, sed pro veste qua adolescentuli die tirocinii induebantur." Edit. Bonon. 1500, p. 255.

The opinion which Beroaldus refutes is absurd enough :—his own, even with Apuleius before him, is not much more to the purpose ; and the *male literati* have a fair opening for a retort—*vivitur hoc pacto !*

The *umbo*, in a word, was the gathering of the folds of the toga on the left shoulder, where they formed a kind of circular protuberance, knot, or boss : from this the extremity of the lappet fell down before, and was tucked into the girdle, forming what they called the *sinus*, (an apology for a pocket,) in which papers, books, and other light articles were carried, and it is far from improbable that some affected display was made of it, in the pride of recent *manhood*.

"Nardinus," Sir W. Drummond says, "informus us, that in the *Suburra* (the poet's walk) were the *lupanaria*:" and he adds, that we can be no longer at a loss for what attracted him thither. This observation (whether just or not) should have prevented him from translating *umbo* a "shield;" for unless Persius proposed to imitate ancient Pistol, and *tear the poor w—s ruffs* there, he scarcely presented himself in arms.

The epithet *white* (*candidus*) alludes both to the ordinary colour of the toga, and perhaps to the gloss of newness on this momentous occasion : the *blandi comites*, who accompany our poet through this confluence of vice and folly, the *Suburra*, were

Me tibi supposui ; teneros tu suscipis annos
 Socratico, Cornute, sinu : tunc fallere solers
 Apposita intortos extendit regula mores ;
 Et premitur ratione animus, vinctique laborat,
 Artificemque tuo ducit sub pollice vultum.

Tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles,
 Et tecum primas epulis decerpere noctes :
 Unum opus, et requiem pariter disponimus ambo,
 Atque verecunda laxamus seria mensa.

Non equidem hoc dubites, amborum fœdere certo
 Consentire dies, et ab uno sidere duci.
 Nostra vel æquali suspendit tempora Libra,
 Parca tenax veri ; seu, nata fidelibus, hora
 Dividit in Geminos concordia fata duorum ;

probably those who changed the toga at the same time with himself—*mutatæque simul togæ*. This, as has been elsewhere observed, was an act of great solemnity, and formed, among the youths who assisted at it, a band of fellowship which frequently subsisted unbroken through life.

VER. 79. *And sure our lives, &c.*] The reader will probably be glad to escape from an astrological comment on this passage. It contained, beyond question, the most approved deductions from the Tuscan almanack of the year ; and if Cornutus could overlook a want of novelty in the language and application, which, to say the truth, are transcribed with somewhat too free a pen from Horace, he might find much to admire in the warmth and sincerity of his affectionate pupil. Dryden (though an adept) has very little on this subject, and that little is cautiously delivered : perhaps Dr. Busby, to whom he inscribed his translation, was no *Philomath*.

I fled to you, Cornutus, pleased to rest
My hopes and fears on your Socratick breast ;
Nor did you, gentle Sage, the charge decline :
'Then, dextrous to beguile, your steady line
Reclaim'd, I know not by what winning force,
My morals, warp'd from virtue's straighter course,
While reason press'd incumbent on my soul,
That struggled to receive the strong control,
And took, like wax, subdued by plastick skill,
'The form your hand imposed—and bears it still !

Can I forget, how many a summer's day,
Spent in your converse, stole, unmark'd, away ?
Or how, while listening with increas'd delight,
I snatch'd from feasts, the earlier hours of night ?
—One time (for to your bosom still I grew)
One time of study, and of rest, we knew ;
One frugal board, where, every care resign'd,
An hour of blameless mirth relax'd the mind.

And sure our lives, which thus accordant move,
(Indulge me here, Cornutus,) clearly prove,
That both are subject to the self-same law,
And from one horoscope their fortunes draw :
And whether destiny's unerring doom,
In equal Libra, poised our days to come ;
Or friendship's holy hour our fates combined,
And to the 'Twins, a sacred charge, assign'd ;

Saturnumque gravem nostro Jove frangimus una :
Nescio quod, certe est, quod me tibi temperat, as-
trum.

Mille hominum species, et rerum discolor usus :
Velle suum cuique est, nec voto vivitur uno.
Mercibus hic Italis mutat, sub sole recenti,
Rugosum piper, et pallentis grana cumini ;
Hic satur irriguo mavult turgescere somno ;
Hic campo indulget : hunc alea decoquit ; ille
In Venerem est putris : sed cum lapidosa chiragra

VER. 52, 53.

“ Mille hominum species, et rerum discolor usus :

“ Velle suum cuique est, nec voto vivitur uno.”

Mira cano ! A superfluous line and a half in Persius ! Why he conceived it necessary to press this trite thought so repeatedly on the reader's attention, is not very apparent : unless, as he was now entering on the main point of his satire, he wished to open the subject with more than ordinary parade.

VER. 96. ———— and cummin's blanching grain]—*pallentis grana cumini*. This plant, a mere dwarf in our gardens, “ grows (Sir W. Drummond says) to the height of eight or nine feet in hot countries. It is much cultivated by the Maltese, with whom it forms an article of commerce.” It seems to have served, in some measure, as a succedaneum for pepper, which was too expensive a spice for common tables, being, as Pliny tells us, purchased by weight, *ut aurum vel argentum*. Persius calls it *pallens*, from its property of producing paleness when used as a decoction : whence those who affected the appearance of hard and laborious students, without being so, swallowed *potations of it, pottle-deep*, and drank themselves pale, as the students of the Temple eat themselves learned. Horace says, that if he happened, by any chance, to look wan, his imitators betook them-

Or Jove, benignant, broke the gloomy spell
 By angry Saturn wove ;—I know not well—
 But sure some star there is, whose bland con-
 troul,

Subdues, to yours, the temper of my soul !

Countless the various species of mankind,
 Countless the shades which separate mind from
 mind ;

No general object of desire is known ;

Each has his will, and each pursues his own.

With Latian wares, one roams the Eastern main,
 To purchase spice, and cummin's blanching grain ;
 Another, gorged with dainties, swill'd with wine,
 Fattens in sloth, and snores out life, supine ;
 This loves the Campus ; that, destructive play ;
 And those, in wanton dalliance, melt away :—

selves to their cummin immediately ; and Pliny mentions one Porcius Latro, who set numbers agog to catch by this mode the cadaverous appearance of his bloodless cheeks : *Cuminum pallorem bibentibus gignit. Ita certe ferunt Porcii Latronis, clari inter magistros dicendi, affectatores similitudinem coloris studiis contracti imitatos, &c. lib. xx. c. 14.*

VER. 99. *This loves the Campus ;]* *Hic campo indulget.* Some of the commentators suppose that Persius alludes to the struggles of ambition, because the popular elections took place in the Campus—*descendat in campo petitor* : and Dryden, therefore, translates it :

“ This bribes for high preferment in the state ;”

but the whole passage shews that the allusion is to the gymnastick

Fregerit articulos, veteris ramalia fagi,
 Tunc crassos transisse dies, lucemque palustrem,
 Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.

At te nocturnis juvat impallescere chartis :
 Cultor enim juvenum, purgatas inseris aures
 Fruge Cleanthea : petite hinc, juvenesque senes-
 que,
 Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica canis !

amusements of the Campus. I do not see why Sir W. Drummond should treat Dryden with such ridicule in this place. His own version, " here one prefers the chase," is incorrect ; for hunting was as little in the poet's thoughts, as the struggle for office.

VER. 105. *With late regret, &c.]*

Tunc crassos transisse dies, lucemque palustrem,
 Et sibi jam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.

They groan over that portion of life spent in gross sensuality, and a fenny or misty atmosphere : *i. e.* in mental ignorance. But what is the meaning of the last line ? " They not only," says Madan, " bemoan the past ; but the portion of life which still remains, being imbittered by remorse, becomes a grief and a burden to them." If this be the sense, the translation should run somewhat in this manner ;

Then they look back with unavailing tears,
 On the gross darkness of their mispent years ;
 Nor, with less anguish, gaze at what remains
 Of wretched life—an age of griefs and pains !

But *vita relicta* can scarcely bear this meaning: *relicta* seems used here as in that fine passage of the third Satire, *Magne Pater, &c* for the main end and object of their past life, wholly thrown away and abandoned by them. In this sense Holyday evidently understood the passage, and his version of

But when the knotty gout their strength has broke,
 And their dry joints crack like some wither'd oak,
 Then they look back, confounded and aghast,
 On the gross days in fogs and darkness past ;
 With late regret the waste of life deplore :
 No purpose gain'd, and time, alas ! no more.

But you, my friend, whom nobler views delight,
 To pallid vigils give the studious night ;
 Cleanse youthful breasts from every noxious weed,
 And sow the tilth with Cleanthean seed.
 There seek, ye young, ye old, (secure to find,)
 That certain end, which stays the wavering
 mind ;—

Stores, which endure, when other means decay,
 Through life's last stage, a sad and cheerless way !

it, though the most tuneless, is yet, I believe, the most faithful
 that has hitherto appeared :

“ Anger and griefe doe then begin a strife
 Within them, for their base and durty life
 Now spent : when now, but now too late, they looke
 Upon the life they wretchedly forsooke.”

Howell understands this literally, and applies it with some
 humour to the foggy students of Leyden :—this is a good im-
 provement, at least, of Casaubon, who thinks that by passing
crassos dies lucemque palustrem, is meant living in the steam of
 hot-baths !

VER. 110. ——— with *Cleanthean seed*.] i. e. with Stoick
 philosophy. Cleanthes was one of the most distinguished fol-
 lowers of Zeno, the founder of the school. The mention of

“Cras hoc fiet.” Idem cras fiet. “Quid! quasi
magnum

Nempe diem donas?”—Sed cum lux altera venit,
Jam cras hesternum consumsimus: ecce, aliud
cras

Egerit hos annos, et semper paulum erit ultra.
Nam quamvis prope te, quamvis temone sub uno
Vertentem sese, frustra sectabere canthum,
Cum rota posterior curras, et in axe secundo.

Libertate opus est; non hac, qua, ut quisque
Velina

Publius emeruit, scabiosum tesserula far

this name brings Persius, without much violence, to the main object of his Satire, the discussion of that grand paradox of the sect a *Cynicis tunica distantia*, namely, that “the wise man alone is free;” and he plunges into it with a zeal not altogether borne out by his knowledge; but with much spirit, acuteness, and ingenuity. Something, on this head, has been already delivered in the introductory pages; to these, the reader must be referred, for the topick claims not to be treated anew.

VER. 71. ——— *sectabere canthum*.] Quintilian appears dissatisfied with this word, which he sets down as a barbarism.¹ If the Romans had no mode of expressing what we call the felly of a wheel, but by a periphrasis, the introduction of a simple term by our poet was not unjustifiable. Canthus has been derived from the Spanish, the Celtick, the Gothick, &c. Without wandering so widely, it seems to me that the origin of the word is simply the *αἰλῦξ* of Homer, the common parent, perhaps, of them all.

VER. 115. “Right; and to-morrow this shall be our care,” &c.

“ Right ; and to-morrow this shall be our care.”
Alas ! to-morrow, like to-day, will fare.

“ What ! is one day, forsooth, so great a boon ?”
But when it comes, (and come it will too soon,)
Reflect, that yesterday’s to-morrow’s o’er.—
Thus one “ to-morrow !” one “ to-morrow !” more,
Have seen long years before them fade away ;
And still appear no nearer than to-day !—

So while the wheels on different axles roll,
In vain, (though govern’d by the self-same pole,)
The hindmost to o’ertake the foremost tries ;
Fast as the one pursues, the other flies !

FREEDOM, in truth, it steads us much to have :
Not that, by which each manumitted slave,
Each Publius, with his tally, may obtain
A casual dole of coarse and damaged grain.

One of Martial’s neatest epigrams turns on this thought. It deserves a better translation than Cowley’s, though this is the best that I can find :—

“ Cras te victurum,” &c.

“ To-morrow you will live, you always cry ;
In what far country does this morrow lie,
That ’tis so mighty long ere it arrive ?
Beyond the Indies does this morrow live ?
’Tis so far-fetch’d this morrow, that I fear
’Twill be both very old and very dear.
To-morrow I will live, the Fool does say ;
To-day itself’s too late ; the Wise liv’d yesterday !”

Lib v. 49.

Vna. 129. *Each Publius, with his tally, &c.] When a slave*

Possidet. Heu, steriles veri, quibus una Quiritem
 Vertigo facit ! Hic Dama est, non tressis agaso,
 Vappa, et lippus, et in tenui farragine mendax:
 Verterit hunc dominus,—momento turbinis exit
 MARCUS DAMA. Papæ ! Marco spondente, recu-
 sas

Credere tu nummos ? Marco sub iudice palles ?
 Marcus dixit ? ita est. Adsigna, Marce, tabellas.

was manumitted, and enrolled among the tribes into which the citizens were divided, he received, together with a name, a tally, (a square bit of wood properly marked and numbered,) on the shewing of which he was entitled to share in the distributions of grain, &c. which occasionally took place (at a reduced price) in favour of the poor. The grotesque hyperboles of Persius, in which much of his peculiar humour consists, cannot be exhibited to the English reader without a degree of circumlocution that would weaken their effect. Here the new citizen has not a *tessera*, but a *tesserula*, a little paltry ticket ; the corn which he receives is *scabiosum*, smutty : and he is thrust into the *tribus Velina*, the meanest of the whole. All this has a good effect in the original.

M. J. Rud. Sinner (the editor of the 12mo. Persius, printed at Berne, in 1765,) has subjoined the following note to this passage, transcribed, as he says, from a MS. of the twelfth century : “ *Velina tribus genus servorum, sed propter strenuitatem suam Romani fecere eos liberos : sed tamen non dignati sunt eos eodem honore ; sed cum accipiebant frumentum dabatur illis siligo, et ideo dicitur scabiosum far ; sed cum accipiebant aurum, dabatur illis argentum.*” If this be so, it is well ; but I know of no other authority for it.

VER. 132. *Who think a Roman with one turn is made !*] “ The ceremony of making a slave free” (I use the words of Sir W. Drummond) “ was very short. The prætor turned him round,

—O souls, involv'd in Error's thickest shade !
 Who think a Roman with one turn is made !
 Look on this paltry groom, this Dama here,
 Who, at three farthings would be prized too dear ;
 This blear-eyed scoundrel, who your bran would
 steal,
 And outface truth to hide the starving meal ;
 Yet—let his master twirl this knave about,
 And MARCUS DAMA, in a trice, steps out !—
 Amazing ! MARCUS surety ?—yet distrust !
 MARCUS your judge ?—yet fear a doom unjust !
 MARCUS avouch it, say you ?—then, 'tis clear !
 The Will !—set your hand first, good MARCUS,
 here.

laid his wand upon his head, and said, *hunc esse liberum volo*. Forthwith the *new man* strutted out of the prætor's house with the cap of liberty on his head : and giving himself a *prænomen*, was saluted by this new appellation as he passed through the streets." There is much pleasantry in the frequent repetition of Marcus, and the studied exclusion of all reference to the former name. Marcus was the *prænomen* of several of the first men of the state, and probably that of Dama's late master ; he could not therefore but be highly flattered by it ; for, as Horace well observes :

“ ——— gaudent prænomine molles
 Auriculæ.”

But the satire is less directed at Dama than at the degenerate Romans, who pressed forward with such eagerness to pay their interested court to the new citizen, and sooth his ears with an unwearied repetition of the proud appellation.

On *Quiritem*, the old scholiast observes—*Singulariter abusive dixit ;—nam sicut Pater conscriptus non dicitur, ita non Quiritem*

Hæc mæra libertas, hoc nobis pilea donant.

“ An quisquam est alius liber, nisi ducere vitam
Cui licet, ut voluit? licet, ut volo, vivere : non sim
Liberior Bruto ?” Mendose colligis, inquit
Stoicus hic, (aurem mordaci lotus aceto.)

Hoc reliquum accipio ; LICET illud, et UT VOLO,
tolle.

“ Vindicta, postquam meus à prætore recessi,
Cur mihi non liceat jussit quodcunque voluntas,
Excepto si quid Masurî rubrica vetavit ?”

Disce ;—sed ira cadat naso, rugosaque sanna,
Dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.
Non prætoris erat stultis dare tenuia rerum

dicitur. Had he forgotten Juvenal—*ima plebe Quiritem Invenies ?*
Or did he disregard his authority ?

VER. 143. *This is mere liberty, &c.] Hæc est mera libertas.*
i. e. abstract, as opposed to a state of slavery ; taken in the
strict and literal sense, of manumission from foreign controul,
in which sense only you can be said to be free. The reply of
Marcus, considering his view of the subject, is sufficiently per-
tinent.

I cannot conceive why all our translators suppose this pas-
sage to be ironical, and set it out with notes of admiration. It
is surely serious ; and much to the purpose ; but they were pro-
bably misled by Holyday :

————— “ Oh, here’s

Brave liberty and true, which our cap wears
As well as wee !”

Thus Brewster,

“ A sample here of perfect freedom see ;
Thanks to our caps, they make us charming free !”

VER. 156. ~~—————~~ *the rubrick of the law]* See Juvenal,

This is mere liberty,—a name, alone:
Yet this is all the cap can make our own.

“Sure, there’s no other. All mankind agree,
That those who live without controul, are free :
I live without controul ; and *therefore* hold
Myself more free, than Brutus was, of old.”

Absurdly put ; a Stoick cries, whose ear,
Rins’d with sharp vinegar, is quick to hear :
True ;—all who live without controul are free ;
But that you live so, I can ne’er agree.

“No ? From the Prætor’s wand when I with-
drew,
Lord of myself, why, might I not pursue
My pleasure, unrestrain’d ?—respect still had,
To what the rubrick of the law forbad.”

Listen,—but first your brows from anger clear,
And bid your nose dismiss that rising sneer ;
Listen, while I the genuine truth impart,
And root those old wives’ fables from your heart.

It was not, is not in the “Prætor’s wand,”
To gift a fool with power, to understand

Sat. xiv. v. ¹⁶²200. The old scholiast says—*Hic Masurius Sabinus legis consultus fuit, cujus rubricam vocat minium, quo tituli legum annotabantur.* It would seem from this, that he had drawn up a Digest of the Civil Law, which passed under his name. Besides the title, it is probable that the penal part of the law, was also written in red letters—a practice not without its advan-

Officia, atque usum rapidæ permittere vitæ :
 Sambucam citius caloni aptaveris alto.
 Stat contra Ratio, et secretam garrit in aurem ;
 Ne liceat facere id, quod quis vitiabit agendo.
 Publica lex hominum, naturaque continet hoc fas,
 Ut teneat vetitos inscitia debilis actus.
 Diluis belleborum, certo compescere puncto
 Nescius examen ? vetat hoc natura medendi :
 Navem si poscat sibi peronatus arator
 Luciferi rudis, exclamet Melicerta perîsse
 Frontem de rebus. Tibi recto vivere talo

tages in a state where laws and municipal regulations were promulgated by fixing them up in porticos, and places of public resort :

“ ——— Dicant cur condita sit lex
 Bis sex in tabulis, et cur rubrica minetur ? ”

Prudent. lib. v.

Masurius flourished under Tiberius, by whom he was raised to the dignity of a knight ; a fact which proves (says M. Monier) that “ in those days honours were more easily acquired than riches ; ” for Masurius fell into poverty, in his old age, and was supported by the liberality of his pupils. As Masurius was a very eminent lawyer, it would be somewhat difficult to account for his distress, but for a trait in his character incidentally furnished by Athenæus. He was passionately devoted to music—*musicæ assiduam operam navavit*—and apparently fiddled away his clients.

Vers. 181. *Would not Palemon, &c.*] Persius calls him Melicerta ; this was his earthly name ; but I have given him, *honoris ergo*, the name which he bore among the marine deities.

The nicer shades of duty, and educe,
From short and rapid life, its end and use :
The labouring hind shall sooner seize the quill,
And strike the lyre with all a master's skill.
Reason condemns the thought, with mien severe,
And drops this maxim in the secret ear, .
“ Forbear to venture, with preposterous toil,
On what, in venturing, you are sure to spoil.”
In this plain sense of what is just and right,
The laws of nature and of man unite ;
That Inexperience should some caution show,
And spare to reach—at what she does not know.

Prescribe you hellebore ! without the skill,
To weigh the ingredients, or compound the pill ?—
Physick, alarm'd, the rash attempt withstands,
And wrests the dangerous mixture from your
hands.

Should the dull clown, skill'd in no star to guide
His dubious course, rush on the trackless tide, .
Would not Palemon at the fact exclaim,
And swear the world had lost all sense of shame

Say, is it your's by wisdom's steady rays,
To walk secure, through life's entangled maze ?

He was the child of Ino, who, to save him from the insane fury
of her husband Athamas, leaped with him into the sea ; where
Neptune, at the solicitation of Venus, took them both into his
suite.

Ars dedit ? et veri speciem dignoscere calles,
 Ne qua subærato mendosum tinniat auro ?
 Quæque sequenda forent, quæque evitanda vicis-
 sim,

Illa prius creta, mox hæc carbone notâsti ?
 Es modicus voti, presso lare, dulcis amicis ?
 Jam nunc astringas, jam nunc granaria laxes ?
 Inque luto fixum possis transcendere nummum,
 Nec glutto sorbere salivam Mercurialem ?
*Hæc mea sunt ; teneo :—*cum vere dixeris, esto
 Liberque ac sapiens, prætoribus et Jove dextro.

Sin tu, cum fueris nostræ paulo ante farinæ,
 Pelliculam veterem retines, et, fronte politus,
 Astutam vapido servas sub pectore vulpem ;

“ ——— abstulit illis

Quod mortale fuit, majestatemque verendam
 Imposuit.” Met. lib. iv. v. 538.

VER. 197. *Nor feel, when in the mire, &c.*] “ An allusion” (Holyday says) “ to the sport that children used ; who tying a piece of money to the end of a string, would cover the string with dirt and let the money bee seene, which, when any greedie fellow passing by would stoope to take up, they would plucke the string, and so delude him.” The thought, as usual, is from Horace :

“ In triviis fixum cum se dimittit ob assem, &c.”

but our poet has given strength to the expression :

“ Nec glutto sorbere salivam Mercurialem.”

Saliva has nothing to do, here, with what some of the criticks term flavour or relish, (as in the next Satire,) but is simply put

Your's, to discern the specious from the true,
And where the gilt conceals the brass from view?
Speak, can you mark, with some appropriate
sign,

What to pursue, and what, in turn, decline?
Does moderation all your wishes guide?
And temperance at your cheerful board preside?
Do friends your love experience? are your stores,
Now dealt with closed and now with open doors,
As fit occasion calls? Can you restrain
The eager appetite of sordid gain;
Nor feel, when, in the mire, the coin you note,
Mercurial spittle gurgles in your throat?

If you can say, and truly, "THESE ARE MINE;
And THIS I CAN:"—suffice it. I decline
All further question; you are Wise and Free,
No less by Jove's, than by the Law's decree.

But if, good Marcus, you, who form'd so late,
One of our batch, of our enslaved estate,
Beneath a specious outside, still retain
The foul contagion of your ancient strain;
If the sly fox still burrow in some part,
Some secret corner, of your tainted heart;

for that secretion generated by excessive desire of any object in contemplation. Can you, in short, pass by a piece of money without feeling your mouth water at it? Dryden, who translates the passage,

Quæ dederam supra, repeto ; funemque reduco.
 Nil tibi concessit ratio ; digitum exere, peccas ;
 Et quid tam parvum est ? sed nullo thure litabis,
 Hæreat in stultis brevis ut semuncia recti.
 Hæc miscere nefas : nec, cum sis cætera fossor,

“ ————— Can you gifts despise,
 “ And look on wealth with undesiring eyes ? ”

has missed the poet's drift, which was to point out the base and sordid nature of avarice.

VER. 207. *I straight retract, &c.*] It seems hardly possible to stumble in this place, yet Sheridan and Burton have managed to do it. According to the former, the passage refers to “ a favourite play of the boys of Athens, who used to put a rope through a hole in a post, and then tugg at each end of it ; ” while the latter explains it of “ tying the slave again to the whipping post ” ! This, however, Persius could not do, even though he had called in Cornutus to assist him ; for Dama was legally (though not morally) free. What the poet means to say, or rather what he actually does say, is to this effect : “ I allowed you to be free (*Stoicè*) on such and such assumptions ; but if these be not admitted, I recal my grant : ” alluding to letting out the string with which animals were held, and which, if they made an ill use of their liberty, and attempted to get away, was drawn in again. Juliet is worth a hundred commentators here :

“ I would have thee gone,
 And yet no farther than a wanton's bird ;
 Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
 Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
 And with a silk thread plucks it back again.”

VER. 211. *Reason concedes you nothing.*] “ *Nihil permittit ratio arbitrio tua ;* ” Koenig says : but is not *ratio* rather used here in opposition to *vindicta* ? The prætor indeed has set you

I straight retract the freedom which I gave,
And hold you Dama still, and still a slave!

Reason concedes you nothing. Let us try.
Thrust forth your finger. "See." O, heavens,
awry!

Yet what so trifling?—But, though altars smoke,
Though clouds of incense every god invoke,
In vain you sue, one drachm of RIGHT to find,
One scruple, lurking in the foolish mind.
Nature abhors the mixture: the rude clown,
As well may fling his spade and mattock down,

free; but what has wisdom (*ratio*) done for you? Nothing: the conclusion follows—you are therefore still ignorant, and still enthralled. In the succeeding lines Persius plunges into the depths of stoicism. He does his best to elucidate the matter; but his success is not very great: nor has he the merit of producing any thing new. What is worse, Horace had long before laughed at the transcendental philosophy here doled out with so much gravity; and it is quite wearisome to meet with lines, and half lines, which, having been already employed by the former with exquisite irony, can, with difficulty, be endured in a formal argument on the same subject. There is bad taste in it, too; and (some perhaps may think) a little want of modesty.

Enough has been said in the Introduction, on the paradox here advanced:—briefly, Persius, who had the passage in the *Enchiridion* before him—*ἡ φιλοσοφία φησιν, ὅτι οὐδὲ τον δακτύλον ἐκλίνειν εἰκὴ προσήκει* labours to prove that there is no medium between absolute wisdom and absolute folly; and that, as Dryden has it,

"Virtue and vice are never in one soul,
A man is wholly wise, or wholly is a fool:"

Tres tantum ad numeros satyri moveare Bathylli.

“Liber ego.” Unde datum hoc sumis, tot sub-
dite rebus?

An dominum ignoras, nisi quem vindicta relaxat?

“I, puer, et strigiles Crispini ad balnea defer”—

Si increpuit; “Cessas, nugator?” servitium acre!

Te nihil impellit; nec quicquam extrinsecus intrat,

Quod nervos agitet: sed si intus, et in jecore ægro

Nascantur domini, quâ tu impunitior exis,

Atque hic, quem ad strigiles scutica et metus egit
herilis?

Mane piger stertis: “Surge,” inquit Avaritia;

“eja,

Surge!” negas; instat: “Surge,” inquit. Non
queo. “Surge!”

Et quid agam? “Rogitas? saperdas advehe Ponto,
Castoreum, stuppas, hebenum, thus, lubrica Coa:

from which notable position, it follows, among other consequences, that the latter cannot perform the most trivial act without blundering egregiously, and encouraging the whole *Porch* to set up a cry of “*Peccas! peccas!*”

VER. 218. *To dance three steps with soft Bathyllus' air.*] Burton tells us that he was a young pantomime in Nero's time. In this, he is followed by Madan, who adds that, for his great agility, he was surnamed the Satyr. If the reader turns to Juvenal, Sat. vi. he will find that Bathyllus could not well be a young man in the time of Nero, since he died, at a good old age, about half a century before Nero was born. Nor was he ever surnamed Satyr, unless by Madan, in his version of the

And with light foot, and agile limbs prepare,
To dance three steps with soft Bathyllus' air!

"Still, I am free." You! subject to the sway
Of countless masters, FREE! What *datum*, pray,
Supports your claim? Is there no other yoke,
Than that which, from your neck, the Prætor
broke!—

"Go, bear these scrapers to the bath with speed;
What! loitering, knave?"—Here's servitude in-
deed!

Yet you unmov'd the angry sounds would hear;
You owe no duty, and can know no fear,
But if, within, you feel the strong controul—
If stormy passions lord it o'er your soul,
Are you more free, than he whom threat'nings urge,
To bear the strigils, and escape the scourge?

'Tis morn'; yet sunk in sloth, you snoring lie.
"Up! up!" cries Avarice, "and to business hie;
Nay, stir." I will not. Still she presses, "Rise!"
I cannot. "But you must, and shall," she cries.
And to what purpose? "This a question! Go,
Bear fish to Pontus, and bring wines from Co;

text. What he construes the Satyr Bathyllus, should be translated the Satyr of Bathyllus; a character in some pantomime, (probably the Cyclops of Euripides,) in which he was peculiarly excellent. The Bathyllus of Nero's time was Paris.

VER. 230. *To bear the strigils,*] See Juvenal, Sat. iii.

VER. 236. *Bear fish to Pontus, &c.*] *Saperdas advehit Ponto.*

Tolle recens primus piper è sitiente camelo.
 Verte aliquid ; jura." Sed Jupiter audiet. " Eheu !
 Varo, regustatum digito terebrare salinum
 Contentus perages, si vivere cum Jove tendis."
 Jam pueris pellem succinctus, et cœnophorum
 aptas ;

The ancients who notice the *saperda*, do not agree among themselves ; perhaps—and this is by no means unlikely—the fish differed in quality, according to the place in which it was found. Arcestratus (Athenæus, lib. iii.) speaks of it as a coarse fish. Ainsworth, who repeats the words, tells us in another place, that it was the same fish as the *coracinus* ; but we learn from the work just quoted, that the *coracinus* was a very delicate fish. Add to this, that the *coracinus* was peculiar to the Nile, whereas the *saperda* was found in the Black Sea, on the coast of Asia Minor, and in many other places. Pollux, who calls it a Lesbian fish, appears to confound it with the tunny, undoubtedly a coarse fish ; and Festus, if his text be correct, terms it *genus piscis vilissimi*.—But, whatever it was, it was used at Rome as the anchovy is used with us, as a pickle, or seasoning for other dishes ;* which accounts for an expression of Varro, preserved by Festus : "*Videmur belli festivi saperdæ, cum simus omnes capri*." We fancy ourselves pleasant fellows, when we are little better than so many boobies. The word, therefore, was proverbial for something smart and agreeable : this must have altogether escaped M. Achaintre, or we should not have been favoured with his exquisite version of it. In some MSS., he says, he found the line thus written :

" En ! Quid agam ? Rogitas ? En *saperdam* ! Adevhe Ponto."
 i. e. *Me voici ! Que ferai-je ? Vous le demandez ? O le pauvre*

* *Saperda genus est salsamenti quod ex pisce fit. Schol.*

Bring ebony, flax, whate'er the East supplies,
 Musk for perfumes, and gums for sacrifice:
 Prevent the mart, and the first pepper take
 From the tired camel, ere his thirst he slake.
 Buy, barter, and, if interest prompt, forswear."—
 But Jove, perhaps, will hear me.—"Jove? O rare!
 Thou dolt!—but, mark—that hungry thumb will
 bore

The empty salt, (scraped to the quick before,)
 For one poor grain, a vapid meal to mend,
 If thou aspir'st to thrive, with Jove thy friend!"

You rouse, (for who can truths like these with-
 stand?)

Victual your slaves, and urge them to the strand;

hère! l'imbecille!—"This is not," (he adds) "the way in which it is usually rendered, but it gives spirit to the dialogue!"

There is yet a difficulty—whether the fish was carried to Pontus, or brought from that country to Italy. Sir. W. Drummond understands it in the former sense; and I have followed him: though I more than doubt whether the apology of language will bear either of us out. After all, what Avarice appears to recommend is a kind of trading voyage, an exchange of commodities from port to port. I must not omit to observe that my new acquaintance, Mr. Eelbeck, disposes of this passage without any difficulty. *Saperdas advehe Ponto*, he translates: "Carry shell-fish to the sea"! and no doubt that is the properest place for them.

Persius has found many imitators; but as none of them possessed his peculiar talent of strong and grotesque humour, it

Ocyus ad navem : nihil obstat, quin trabe vasta
 Ægæum rapias,—nisi solers Luxuria ante
 Seductum moneat : “ Quò deinde, insane, ruis ?
 quò !

Quid tibi vis ? calido sub pectore mascula bilis
 Intumuit, quam non extinxerit urna cicutæ.
 Tun' mare transilias ? tibi torta cannabe fulto,
 Cœna sit in transtro, Vejentanumque rubellum
 Exhalet, vapida læsum pice, sessilis obba ?
 Quid petis ? ut nummi, quos hic quincunce mo-
 desto

Nutrieras, pergant avidos sudare deunces ?
 Indulge Genio ; carpamus dulcia : nostrum est,
 Quod vivis ; cinis, et manes, et fabula fies :

is not a matter of surprise that he still remains unrivalled. Boileau has introduced the arguments of both the speakers into his eighth Satire ; but in a manner that shews how ill he understood the original. The best lines (though all are good) are these :

“ Que faire ? Il faut partir ; les matelôts sont prêts.
 Ou, si pour l'estrainer l'argent manque d'attraits,
 Bientôt l'Ambition, et tout son escorte,
 Dans le sein du repos vient le prendre à main forte,
 L'envoie en furieux au milieu des hasards,
 Se faire estropier sur les pas des Cæsars.”—

Si l'argent manque d'attraits, is directly in the face of the poet's position ; it is not the weakness of any particular passion, but the equal influence of all, which proves the Damas of the text to be still in a state of slavery.

VER. 269. ——— *a shade, an empty sound.*] The nothingness :

Prepared, in haste, to follow : and, ere now,
 Had to the Ægean turn'd your vent'rous prow,
 But that sly Luxury the process eyed,
 Waylaid your desperate steps, and, taunting, cried,

“ Ho, madman ? whither, in this hasty plight ?
 What passion drives you forth ? what furies fright ?
 Whole urns of hellebore might hope, in vain,
 To cool this high-wrought fever of the brain.
 What ! quit your peaceful couch, renounce your
 ease,

To rush on hardships, and to dare the seas ?
 And, while a broken plank supports your meat,
 And a coil'd cable proves your softest seat,
 Suck from squab jugs, that pitchy scents exhale,
 The seaman's beverage, sour at once and stale !
 And all, for what ? that sums, which now are lent
 At modest five, may sweat out twelve per cent. !—

“ O rather cultivate the joys of sense,
 And crop the sweets which youth and health dis-
 pense ;

Give the light hours to banquets, love, and wine :
 These are the zest of life,—and THESE are mine !
 Time hurries on—and soon will you be found
 “ A heap of dust,” a shade, an empty sound :

of life is noticed by Pindar in a passage of exquisite pathos and beauty, which deserves a better translation than I can give.

Vive memor leti ; fugit hora : hoc, quod loquor,
inde est.

En quid agis ? duplici in diversum scinderis ha-
mo ;

Huiccine, an hunc sequeris ? subeas alternus oportet

Ancipiti obsequio dominos ; alternus oberres.

Nec tu, cum obstiteris semel, instantique negâris
Parere imperio, *Rupi jam vincula*, dicas :

Nam et luctata canis nodum abripit ; attamen illi
Cum fugit, a collo trahitur pars longa catenæ.

“ Dave, cito, hoc credas jubeo, finire dolores

——— Ἐν δολιγῷ

Βροίαν το τέρπνον αὐξεται· οὕτω

Δε καὶ πίνει χαμαί, ἀποδραπῶ

Γνωμα σισευμένον.

Ἐπαμεροί· τί δὲ τις ; τί δ' ἔτις ;

Σκίας οὐαρ, ἀνδραποί. *Pyth.* 8. 131

Alas ! how transient is the vernal hour,
When mortal bliss expands its tender flower !
Scarce open to the light, its glory flies—
It trembles on the stalk, fades, drops, and dies !
Poor fragile being of a sunny day !
What shall I say thou art ?—a breath ?—a span ?
Still, still too much !—a fleeting shadow ? nay,
Dream of a fleeting shadow :—*ST. CH. IS MAN !*

VER. 284. ——— *the dog may snap his chain ; &c.*] This, as
Brewster observes, is pleasantly applied in Hudibras :

“ For though the dame has been my bail
To free me from enchanted jail,

Be mindful, then, of that disastrous hour,
 And live, while yet to live is in your power.
 Lo ! while I speak, the present is become
 The past, and lessens still life's little sum."

Now, sir, decide ; shall this, or that, command ?
 Alas ! the bait, display'd on either hand,
 Distracts your choice :—but, ponder as you may,
 Of this be sure ; both, with alternate sway,
 Will lord it o'er you, while, with slavish fears,
 From side to side your doubtful duty veers.

Nor must you, though in some auspicious hour,
 You spurn their mandate, and resist their power,
 At once conclude their future influence vain :—
 With struggling hard the dog may snap his chain ;
 Yet little freedom from the effort find,
 If, as he flies, he trails its length behind.
 " Yes, I am fix'd ; to Love a long adieu !—
 Nay, smile not, Davus ; you will find it true."

Yet as a dog committed close
 For some offence, by chance breaks loose,
 And quits his clog, but all in vain,
 He still drags after him his chain ;
 So, though my ancle she has quitted,
 My heart continues still committed."

VER. 287. " Yes, I am fix'd, &c.] " Persius " (Owen says)
 " takes this from Menander himself, but Horace took the same
 character from Terence's imitation." The names perhaps are
 from Menander, but the application is surely from Horace, to
 whom the scholar will trace a covert allusion through the whole

Præteritos meditor :” (crudum Chærestratus un-
guem

Abrodens ait hæc) “ An siccis dedecus obstem
Cognatis? an rem patriam rumore sinistro
Limen ad obscœnum frangam, dum Chrysidis
udas

Ebrius ante fores, extincta cum face, canto ?”

Euge puer ! sapias : diis depellentibus agnam
Percute. “ Sed censen’ plorabit, Dave, relicta ?”

Nugaris : solea, puer, objurgabere rubra,

Ne trepidare velis, atque arctos rodere casses.

Nunc ferus, et violens ; at, si vocet, haud mora, di-
cas,

“ Quidnam igitur faciam ? ne nunc, cum accersat,
et ultro

Supplicet, accedam ?” Si totus et integer illinc

Exieras, nec nunc. Hic hic, quem quærimus, hic
est ;

Non in festuca, lictor quam jactat ineptus.

of this passage. Let not Persius, however, be deprived of his due praise. This lively little dialogue may be confidently opposed to any similar scene of equal length in the dramattick and satirick writers, whose works have reached us.

Marcilius supposes that in the words—*udas Ebrius ante fores*, the poet alludes to a beautiful passage in Lucretius :

“ At lacrumans exclusus amator, limina sæpe

Floribus et sertis operit, postesque superbos

Ungit amaracino, et foribus miser oscula figit.”

So, while his nails, gnawn to the quick, yet bled,
The sage Chærestratus, deep-musing, said—

“ Shall I my virtuous ancestry defame,
Consume my fortune, and disgrace my name,
While, at a harlot’s wanton threshold laid,
Darkling, I whine my drunken serenade !”

’Tis nobly spoken :—Let a lamb be brought
To the Twin Powers, who this deliv’rance wrought.

“ But—if I quit her, will she not complain ?
Will she not grieve ? Good Davus, think again.”

Fond trifler ! you will find her “ grief” too late ;
When the red slipper rattles round your pate,
Vindictive of the mad attempt, to foil
Her potent spell, and all-involving toil.

Dismiss’d, you storm and bluster : hark ! she calls,
And, at the word, your boasted manhood falls.—

“ Mark, Davus ; of her own accord, she sues !
Mark, she invites me ! Can I now refuse ?”

Yes Now, and EVER : If you left her door,
Whole and intire, you must return no more.

Right. This is He, the man whom I demand ;
This, Davus !—not the creature of a wand,
Waved by some foolish lictor.

But he seems rather to have had Ovid in view :

“ Ebrius, ad durum formosæ limen amicæ,
Cantat ; habent unctæ mollia sarta comæ.”

VER. 296. *To the Twin Powers, &c.] Diis depellentibus—the*

Jus habet ille sui palpo quem ducit hiantem
 Cretata ambitio? Vigila; et cicer ingere large
 Rixanti populo, nostra ut Floralia possint
 Aprici meminisse senes; quid pulchrius? At cum
 Herodis venere dies; unctaquæ fenestra

averters of evil. These (the Scholiast says) were Castor and Pollux, and I have taken them on his word; not having any better gods at hand for this purpose.

VER. 315. "*Watch the nice hour, &c.*" This is the advice of "Chaulkie Ambition," as Holyday calls her, from the white gown (*cretata*), in which candidates for publick favour canvassed the citizens. A full account of the Floral Games (v. 319) will be found in Juvenal, Sat. vi. It was on these festivals that the ambitious contended for popularity by throwing a number of tallies, entitling the possessors of them to a specific quantity of grain, pulse, &c. among the scrambling multitude, *rixanti populo*. The sums expended in these largesses, while the Republick existed, surpassed the most lavish cost of our contested elections—*Quanto delphinis balæna Britannica major*:—and frequently brought ruin with them, even when the emperors had possessed themselves of the whole power of the state; and the only subject of contention was, to be a slave with the title of an office, or without it.

VER. 321. ——— *And on Herod's day, &c.*] After dismissing the passions of avarice, luxury, love, and ambition, the poet turns to the different modifications of superstition, that is, of the slavish and visionary dread of supernatural agency. He appears to have nearly wearied himself, and, therefore, hurries over this part of his subject, in seeming eagerness to reach the close of his labours.

Of the Herod here mentioned, the pseudo-Cornutus says, "*Hic Herodes apud Judæos regnavit temporibus Augusti imperatoris in partibus Syriæ. Herodis ergo diem natalem Herodiani observant ut etiam sabbata.*" He refers the name, therefore,

And is he

This master of himself, this truly free,
Who marks the dazzling lure Ambition spreads,
And headlong follows where the meteor leads ?
“ Watch the nice hour, and, on the scrambling
tribes,
Pour, without stint, your mercenary bribes,
Vetches and pulse ; that, many a year gone by,
Graybeards, as basking in the sun they lie,
May boast how much your Floral Games surpast,
In cost and splendor, those they witness'd last !”—
A glorious motive !

And on Herod's day,
When every room is deck'd in meet array,

and correctly, I think, to Herod the Great. Casaubon, who adopts his opinion, adds that this sect (the *Herodians*) looked upon Herod as the Messiah. In that case, they must have read their sacred writings very ill. Nothing is more clearly pointed out in the prophetic parts of Scripture, than the gradual extension of the kingdom of the Messiah till it finally embraces the uttermost ends of the earth ; whereas that of Herod declined almost as rapidly as it had risen, and about the time that this Satire was written, was swallowed up and lost. But although none of the Jews could possibly take Herod for Him to whom all eyes were directed, there was still something in his character to attach a part, at least, of so factious, so turbulent, and so selfish a people. Under this monarch the government attained a pitch of power which it had not reached since the Captivity. Herod himself was greatly favoured by Dolabella and Antony, and, subsequently, by Augustus, who, like the former two, ex-

Dispositæ pinguem nebulam vomuere lucernæ,
 Portantes violas ; rubrumque amplexa catinum
 Cauda natat thynni ; tumet alba fidelia vino :
 Labra moves tacitus, recutitaque sabbata palles.

Tunc nigri lemures, ovoque pericula rupto ;
 Hinc grandes Galli, et cum sistro lusca sacerdos,
 Incussere deos inflantes corpora, si non
 Prædictum ter mane caput gustaveris allî.

tended his empire, and, at his request, conferred privileges and immunities upon the Jews then resident in Rome : to this must be added, that he built, or restored the Temple (the idol of Jewish vanity) with surpassing magnificence. On these, and other accounts, many of them honoured his memory, (execrable as it was,) and kept his birth-day as a festival. More than this, it is lost labour to seek in Persius : like all the writers of his time, he speaks of the Jews with equal ignorance and contempt ; and, in this place, confounds a simple festival with their solemn sabbaths.

I cannot account for the difference between the text and the note of Sir W. Drummond on this passage. Throughout the whole of it (he says, with great truth,) it is evident, Persius means to expose the meanness and poverty of the Jews : the *rubrum catinum*, the *alba fidelia*, the *cauda thynni*, all mark the *wretchedness of the feast*, at which the superstitious man assists."—Yet he finds it necessary " to elucidate the sense " by this elegant perversion of the original :

" The fatted calf, the milk-white heifer slay,
 And feasts prepare for Herod's natal day.
 Let coloured lamps from every window beam,
 Fat clouds of incense rise in oily steam,
 Bright censers burn with flowery garlands crown'd,
 And blooming violets breathe odours round.

And lamps along the greasy windows spread,
Profuse of flowers, gross, oily vapours shed;
When the vast tunny's tail in pickle swims,
And the crude must foams o'er the pitcher's brims;
You mutter secret prayers, by fear devised,
And dread the sabbaths of the circumcised !

Then, a crack'd egg-shell fills you with affright,
And ghosts and goblins haunt your sleepless night.

Last, the blind priestess, with her sistrum shrill,
And Galli, huge and high, a dread instill,
Of gods, prepared to vex the human frame
With dropsies, palsies, ills of every name,
Unless the trembling victim champ, in bed,
Thrice every morn, on a charm'd garlick-head.

Let hungry Jews at your rich banquets sup,
And wines luxuriant sparkle in their cup."—

All this is wholly from the purpose. The Romans neither feasted themselves, nor invited the hungry Jews to feast, on this day. The superstitious man, the enemy of true philosophy, (stoicism,) trembled at every rite of every strange deity. Ignorant, as the poet insinuates, of the nature of the gods, he was oppressed with slavish fears, and shuddered at the imaginary menaces of beings whom he despised, or disbelieved;—he probably exclaimed with Didius, at the contemplation of the Druidical ceremonies—"I scorn them, yet they awe me!" and, in fact, history is full of the supernatural terrors of atheists, and the superstitious credulity of unbelievers! Whether the discipline of the Porch was capable of dispelling these mental alarms need not be disputed here; but this was the position of Persius, who attributes not only every vice, but every incon-

Dixeris hæc inter varicosos centuriones ;
 Continuo crassum ridet Vulfenius ingens,
 Et centum Græcos curto centusse licetur.

sistency, to its neglect. He puts, as is usual with him, an extreme case. The Roman (citizen Marcus, if the reader pleases) could not witness the miserable festival of the poor Herodians without an impression of dread, and a secret prayer to the unknown object of their veneration for exemption from some imaginary evil. In the instances of Isis and Cybele which follow, his terrors are yet more abject, and he is therefore dismissed by the poet with ineffable contempt and ridicule. For the *grandes Galli*, and *lusca sacerdos*, see the sixth and tenth Satires of Juvenal. Owen applies the epithets to the mind, "as indicative of folly, stupidity." He is wrong in both cases.

VER. 337. *Preach to the martial throng, &c.*] "I could have wished," Sir W. Drummond says, "the absence of the three concluding lines." And it is impossible not to agree with him. Assuredly, Persius has chosen his audience with little judgment. The Camp is the worst Lyceum imaginable ; and the coarse ridicule bestowed on his beautiful morality in the third Satire, should have banished every thought of hazarding his Stoical paradoxes in such society. Persons much better instructed, and with somewhat more leisure for study on their hands, than Vul-

Preach to the martial throng these lofty strains
And lo ! some chief, more famed for bulk than
brains,

Some vast Vulfenius, bless'd with lungs of brass,
Laughs loud and long at the scholastick ass ;
And, for a clipt cent-piece, sets, by the tale,
A hundred Greek philosophers to sale !

fenius, might reasonably be startled at more than one axiom here set down as indisputable. These dogmas, if advanced at all, should be confined to the schools ; to the busy scenes of life they are not extremely applicable, and least of all, to those of warfare : but Persius seems to bear a rooted dislike to the soldiery, and whenever he has occasion for a more illiterate and worthless character than ordinary, he commonly repairs to the camp for him. His conduct, in this instance, will perhaps remind the reader of Fielding and Smollet, who, in compliance with the wretched cant of their times, manifested a patriotick abhorrence of the military, and seldom went further for a block-head, a parasite, or an adept in low villainy, than the Army List. We have outlived this stupid piece of injustice ; and a " led-captain " is no longer considered as the indispensable *Vice* of every novel.

SATIRE VI.

SATIRE VI

Argument.

This is one of the most pleasing and original of our author's Satires. Its primary object is to point out the proper use of riches : and the author exhibits (after a beautiful exordium, in which the genius and learning of his friend Bassus are complimented with all the warmth of friendship,) his own conduct in the regulation of his desires, as explanatory of his views. A kind and liberal attention to the necessities of others is then recommended ; and the various artifices of avarice to disguise its sordid and selfish feelings under the specious names of prudence, ancient simplicity, a regard for the welfare of successors, &c. are detected and exposed with marked severity. The poem concludes with some sarcastick reproof of the greediness of heirs in expectation, and a striking description of the nature of cupidity, which strengthens with indulgence, and becomes more craving in proportion as it is more abundantly supplied.

But this Satire is not only the most agreeable and original, but the most interesting of our author's works. It was evidently written by him, while yet in the flower of youth, possessed of an independent fortune, of estimable friends, of dear connections, and of a cultivated mind, under the consciousness of irrecoverable disease ;—a situation in itself sufficiently affecting, and which is rendered still more so, by the tranquil, placid, and even cheerful spirit with which every part of it is pervaded.

A. PERSII FLACCI
SATIRÆ.

AD CÆSIUM BASSUM.

[SAT. VI. V. 1.]

ADMOVIT jam bruma foco te, Basse, Sabino ?

VER. 2. *Chased thee, my Bassus, &c.*] There are so many eminent writers of this name that it becomes a matter of hazard to fix upon the individual here meant. Fortunately, as M. Sélis observes, the matter is of no very material import; though Stelluti, with the national vanity of his countrymen, prosecutes the inquiry through several pages. Baptista, who has not many followers, supposes it to be Saleius Bassus, who is celebrated in more than one place, by Tacitus, as a most excellent poet: but he was poor;—unless we take *tenuis*, as Madan evidently does, for slender.

—————“ Sarrano, tenuique Saleio,

“ Gloria quantalibet, quid crit, si gloria tantum ?”

whereas the person to whom this Satire is addressed, appears to be a man of considerable property; he has a villa in the territory of the Sabines, and, if we may trust the next authority, another in Campania. According to the pseudo-Cornutus, (who was evidently in possession of much information, long since lost,) the friend of Persius was a distinguished lyric poet, who was

SATIRES

OF

PERSIUS.

TO CÆSIUS BASSUS.

SAT. VI. V. 1—2.]

SAY, have the wintry storms, which round us beat,
Chased thee, my Bassus, to thy Sabine seat ?

destroyed, together with his country residence, in that great eruption of Vesuvius, in which, as some say, Pliny the elder also perished. Bassus (apparently the person before us) is noticed by Quintilian, as the only lyric poet whose odes could be borne immediately after those of Horace. He wrote, it seems, on many subjects : on the origin of things ; on the gods ; on the stars ; &c. To some of these works, our author elegantly and poetically refers in the introductory lines of his Satire.

For *rerum* (v. 3.) Marcilius and a few others read *vocum* : this delights the critics ; because they find that one Bassus wrote something on the *metre* of Nero, who is thus secured for the Satire, when least hoped. A composition of this kind could scarcely be very poetical, much less could it call forth the lofty terms in which Persius notices it :—but, not to trifle with the reader's patience, the work on metre just mentioned, was in *prose*, and is expressly said to be so by Aul. Gellius, from whom the commentators have taken the circumstance. Holyday, who

Jamne lyra, et tetrico vivunt tibi pectine chordæ?
 Mire opifex numeris veterum primordia rerum,
 Atque marem strepitum fidis intendisse Latinæ!
 Mox juvenes agitare jocos, et pollice honesto
 Egregios lusisse senes!—Mihi nunc Ligus ora
 Intepet, hybernatque meum mare; qua latus in-
 gens
 Dant scopuli, et multa littus se valle receptat.
Lunai portum est operæ cognoscere cives.
 Cor jubet hoc Ennî, postquam destertuit esse

adopts the text of Marcilius, translates it, with more taste than fidelity,

“ Great workman ! whose blest muse sweet lines affordes,
 Full of the native beauty of old wordes ; ”

by which, however, he ingeniously escapes the absurdity of confounding the grammarian with the lyric poet.

VER. 2 ——— to thy Sabine seat.] Persius had left his friend at Rome when he withdrew, for the winter months, to the coasts of Liguria; and he commences with inquiring whether the cold had driven him to follow his example, and shelter himself at his country seat. Had the weather alone been in question, Bassus would have found it quite as favourable at Rome as among the Sabine hills; but the fact was, that men of studious and retired habits, like our poets, were glad of any pretence to escape from the riotous excesses, and the anarchy of the Saturnalia. Campania offered a more genial climate; but Naples was not less disturbed by the liberty of December than the capital; and Vesuvius with its treacherous luxuriance, was preferred, in evil hour, to the rugged security of Mons Tetricus.

VER. 14. *Liguria's coast, &c.*] Persius was fortunate in his

Does musick there thy sacred leisure fill,
 While the strings quicken to thy manly quill?—
 O skill'd, in matchless numbers, to disclose
 How first from Night this fair creation rose;
 And kindling, as the lofty themes inspire,
 To smite, with daring hand, the Latian lyre!
 Anon, with youth and youth's delights to toy,
 And give the dancing chords to love and joy;
 Or wake, with moral touch, to accents sage,
 And hymn the heroes of a nobler age!

To me, while tempests howl and billows rise,
 Liguria's coast a warm retreat supplies;
 Where the huge cliffs an ample front display,
 And, deep within, recedes the sheltering bay.

The Port of Luna, friends, is worth your note—
 Thus, in his sober moments, Ennius wrote,

retreat. Luna, where his villa stood, was one of the many convenient and beautiful situations in which the Gulf of Spezia abounded. The town itself has lain in ruins for ages; what now occupies a part of its site is called Larice. It was frequently visited by the officers of our fleet, while occupied in the blockade of Genoa, and always with new delight. Strabo makes particular mention of the capaciousness of its port, which, he says, would afford shelter to all the navies of Europe. Silius Italicus is equally warm in its praise:

“Tunc quos à niveis exegit Luna metallis,
 “Insignis portu, quo non spatiosior alter,
 “Innumereis cepisse rates, et claudere pontum.”

VER. 18. *Thus, in his sober moments, Ennius, &c.]*

Mæonides Quintus pavone ex Pythagoreo.

Heic ego, securus vulgi, et quid præparet Aus-
ter

Infelix pecori ; securus et, angulus ille
Vicini, nostro quia pinguior : et si adeo omnes
Ditescant orti pejoribus, usque recusem
Curvus ob id minui senio, aut cœnare sine uncto,

“ Lunaï portum est operæ cognoscere, cives.” “ Thus”
(it is Holyday who speaks)

“ Thus said wise Ennius aft’r h’ had dreamed he was

“ Homer, the fifth form’d by Pythagoras

“ His peacockes soul”—

When Warburton produced his dulcet “ emendation ” of Shakspeare, *i’ th’ presence ’t’s death*, Edwards observed that it must have been intended for the use of Cadmus, in his serpent state; but neither in that, nor in any other transformation, could he have enunciated Holyday’s opening line :—In a long and learned note, however, (which those who are desirous of falling into the dream out of which Ennius awoke, may consult with advantage,) he labours exceedingly hard to ascertain the succession of bodies into which the soul of Pythagoras migrated on its way to Ennius : the true station of the peacock perplexes him above measure, and he cannot decide, after all, whether this bird should take the first or the third place among the *five*; for “ that *Quintus* (he says) does not here signify a name but a number, is probable from the received tradition of the Pythagoreans, mentioned by St. Jerome.”

Holyday’s innoxious gravity may raise a smile ; but we must contemplate with other feelings, the obliquity of those who extol this insane doctrine, at which Persius justly laughs, as containing in itself the germs of profound science, sublime philosophy, and a system of ethicks worthy of all the gods.

When, all his dreams of transmigration past,
He found himself plain Quintus, at the last!

Here to repose I give the cheerful day,
Careless of what the vulgar think or say;
Or what the South, from Africk's burning air,
Unfriendly to the fold, may haply bear:
And careless still, though richer herbage crown
My neighbours' fields, or heavier crops embrown.
——Nor, Bassus, though capricious Fortune grace,
Thus, with her smiles, a low-bred, low-born race,
Will e'er thy friend, for that, let Envy plough
One careful furrow on his open brow;
Give crooked age upon his youth to steal,
Defraud his table of one generous meal;

The plain sense of the words *Cor jubet hoc*, &c. seems to be, Such was the description given of this port by Ennius, when he had recovered his senses, and ceased to dream (see page 3) that he was Quintus Homer, instead of Quintus Ennius. "Concerning this man (Holyday says) I may yet add somewhat remarkable. He writ the 12th book of his Annals when he was 67 years of age. It is also related of him that he lived to great age and poverty, which he did bear with a brave spirit; and that he was buried in the monument of Scipio Africanus, whose wars he writ."

It will not occupy much space to subjoin that Ennius must have known the port of Luna well. It was there that the Romans usually took shipping for Corsica and Sardinia, the latter of which islands the poet often visited in company with the elder Cato.

Et signum in vapida naso tetigisse lagena.

Discrepet his alius : geminos, horoscope, varo
 Producis genio. Solis natalibus, est qui
 Tingat olus siccum muria vafer in calice empta,
 Ipse sacrum irrorans patinæ piper : Hic bona dente
 Grandia magnanimus peragit puer. Utar ego,
 utar ;

Nec rhombos ideo libertis ponere lautus,
 Nec tenuem solers turdarum nôsse salivam.

VER. 33. *Or stooping o'er the dregs, &c.]*

“ Et signum in vapida naso tetigisse lagena.

“ This (as Sir W. Drummond well observes) is to draw from the life. Horace himself could hardly have given a more striking picture of avarice.” Yet Sir W. Drummond thus copies the drawing !

“ Yet purest wine still sparkles in my bowl.”

Dryden has rather translated *Stelluti* than *Persius*, and both have widely wandered from the sense.

“ Nè fia ch' estingua con quel vin la sete

“ Ch' io senta al naso esser corrotto, e guasto.”——

“ Nor yet unscent the dregs of wine, that stink

“ O' th' cask, nor in a nasty flaggon drink,” &c.

Picturesque expression constitutes not the least of the poet's excellencies, and should not therefore be versified away. It was the custom of the Romans to pour melted pitch over the mouth of their wine vessels, on which, when sufficiently cooled for the purpose, they impressed their signets. Suspicious of his slaves, the miser is ludicrously represented as bending over the jar, and prying so narrowly into the state of the seal (*signum*) as to touch it with his nose : the wine, too, for which all this soli-

Or, stooping o'er the dregs of vapid wine,
Touch, with suspicious nose, the sacred sign.

But inclinations vary :—and the Power,
That beams, ascendant, on the natal hour,
Even Twins produces of discordant souls,
And tempers, wide asunder as the poles.

The One, on birth-days, and on those alone,
Prepares (but with a forecast all his own)
On tunny-pickle, from the shops, to dine,
And dips his wither'd pot-herbs in the brine ;
Trembles the pepper from his hands to trust,
And sprinkles, grain by grain, the sacred dust.
The Other, large of soul, exhausts his hoard,
While yet a stripling, at the festive board.

But I, who shrink alike from each extreme,
Will use my fortune, friend ; nor think I aim,
In this, with wasteful splendor, to prepare
The sumptuous turbot for my menials' fare ;
Or teach my guests, an epicure profest,
To know the sex of thrushes, by the zest.

citude is manifested, is not unworthy of the rest of the picture, it is good for nothing.

VER. 45. *The Other, large of soul, &c.*] The story of the prodigal runs gaily off the tongue in dactyls and is dispatched almost as quickly as his patrimony was.—“*Hic bona dente*

“*Grandia magnanimus peragit puer.*”

VER. 52. *To know the sex of thrushes, &c.*] I learn from Steluti, that the delicate gourmands of Italy “*sapevano dire gustando*

Messe tenuis propria vive ; et granaria (fas est)
Emole : quid metuas ? occa, et seges altera in her-
ba est.

“ Ast vocat officium : trabe rupta, Bruttia saxa
Prendit amicus inops ; remque omnem, surdaque
vota

Condidit Ionio : jacet ipse in littore, et una
Ingentes de puppe Dei ; jamque obvia mergis
Costa ratis lacerae.” Nunç et de cespite vivo
Frangere aliquid, largire inopi ; ne pictus oberret

li tordi, s'erano domestici ò pur selvaggi, e se maschi ò pur femine.”
These birds (supposed to be our thrush) were accounted great dainties by the Romans, who had particular buildings attached to their houses for breeding, and fattening them for the table.

VER. 57. True ; but the claims of duty, &c.] This passage appeared to Dryden so pre-eminently poetical, that he wished to transfer the merit of it to Lucan ; because” (as he adds) “ except these, and the last two lines of the second Satire, Persius has written nothing elegantly.” It was then the more cruel to deprive him of this. But could Dryden think as he wrote ? Though he studied his author in the French and Italian commentators and criticks, yet he was sufficiently familiar with the text, to render his candour or his sincerity in this assertion, very questionable. “ Comment,” says M. Sélis, justly, “ Dryden s'est-il mépris si grossièrement sur le talent de Perse ? et comment a-t-il daigné traduire un écrivain qu'il estimoit si peu ?” while M. Raoul contents himself with tranquilly observing—fairly enough, it must be confessed—“ *Il ne se dit pas des sottises qu'en France.*” Addison, who, in his Dialogue on Medals, expresses his astonishment at Dryden's opinion, declares, in opposition to it, that Persius is the better poet of the two. Brewster seems to agree with Addison : and Sir W. Drummond,

“Live to your means,”—’tis wisdom’s voice
you hear—

And freely grind the produce of the year :
What scruples check you ? Ply the hoe and spade ;
And lo ! another crop is in the blade.

“True ; but the claims of duty caution crave,
A friend, scarce rescued from the Ionian wave,
Grasps a projecting rock, while, in the deep,
His treasures, with his prayers, unheeded sleep :
I see him stretch’d, desponding, on the ground,
His tutelary gods all wreck’d around ;
His bark dispers’d in fragments o’er the tide,
And sea-mews sporting on the ruins wide.”

Sell, then, a pittance (’tis my prompt advice,)
Of this your land, and send your friend the price ;

with his usual elegance, and with much good taste, has pointed out a number of passages in our poet equal, to say the least of them, to either of those which Dryden thought so exclusively beautiful.

VER. 65. *Sell, then, a pittance, &c.*]

“ ——— nunc et de cespite vivo,
Frange aliquid.”—

Thus explained by the old Scholiast. “*De patrimonio tuo minue aliquid quod tribuas naufrago ;*” and, indeed, I should have thought it somewhat difficult to take it in any other sense. The version of Brewster is :

“Sell, sell some land, and so support thy friend.”
Upon which Sir W. Drummond observes that he can “the more readily *forgive* his (Brewster’s) mistaking the author here, as all the commentators seem to have misunderstood the pas-

**Cærulea in tabula. “Sed cœnam funeris heres
Negliget, iratus quòd rem curtaveris; urnæ**

sage.” “Persius does not literally mean (he continues) that the avaricious man should sell any part of his land.—The private sacrifices to the Lares were made upon a turf:—thus Juvenal:

“Qua festus promissa Deis animalia cespes
Expectat,” &c.

But (with Sir William’s leave) what had the Lares to do with this turf? It was not prepared for them, but for Jupiter and Juno. What renders the quotation the more extraordinary, is Juvenal’s express declaration, that, after setting all things in order for these sacrifices, he will repair home and offer to his little waxen deities, the *lares paterni*, as he calls them, the customary sacrifice, incense and flowers.

The critick’s second example of “sacrificing to the Lares upon a turf,” is not more apposite. “Horace says, in one of his odes:

“Hic vivum mihi cespitem, hic
Verbenas, pueri, ponite, thuraque.”

The Lares are not so much as hinted at; the whole of the ode is directed to Venus, to propitiate whom the altar is raised, and the victim prepared.

“Mactata veniat lenior hostia!”

The last instance is of a piece with the rest:

“——— - positusque carbo in
Cespite vivo.”

Here, too, the Lares are entirely out of the question: the turf was raised, as the poet tells his friend, for the sacrifice of a goat to Bacchus, who had preserved him from being crushed to death by the fall of a tree. Surely Sir W. Drummond reads his authorities, as Sir Hugh Evans *pray’d his pible*, somewhat ill.

The deduction of Sir W., however, from all this is, “that, as the sacrifices to the Lares were always in proportion to the

Lest, with a pictured storm, forlorn and poor,
He ask cheap charity, from door to door.

“ But then, my angry heir, displeased to find
His prospects lessen'd by an act so kind,

expenditure of the family, the person who lessened his household expenses, might be said *frangere aliquid de respite vivo.*” The meaning of Persius, therefore, (says he) follows, “ contract your own expenses, and bestow some of your wealth on your friend.”*

To have done with this raised turf at once—a slight attention to the text will shew that the explanation here given is wide of the poet's argument altogether. Expend the produce of the year, he says: what have you to dread? another crop is at hand. But, replies the miser, if I act in this manner, I shall possess no means of relieving a shipwrecked friend. Aware that this is a mere pretext for indulging his avaricious propensities, Persius sharply answers; in that case, sell a little of your land. Had his words borne the meaning attributed to them by Sir W. Drummond, they would contradict the whole tenour of his satire; and the poet would fall into the very snare which the covetous man had so artfully laid for him. If it be worth while to add another word on a plain passage on which too many have already been wasted, it may be urged that the relief was to be immediate: *Nunc et, &c. Even now, &c.* How could the shipwrecked man be rescued from the instant necessity of begging, if he were compelled to wait for the slow accumulations “ of a contracted expenditure in the article of provisions”?

VER. 67. *Lest, with a pictured storm, &c.*] For the allusion

* When Sir W. Drummond observed that all the commentators before him appear to misunderstand the passage, he ought, in justice, to have made an exception in favour of the scholiast who first happily stumbled on his notable explanation. “ *Nunc et, &c. Idem est ac si dicat, de ara ipsa et de ipso sacrificio, tolle ut largiaris inopi.*”

Ossa inodora dabit ; seu spirent cinnama surdum,
Seu ceraso peccent casiaë, nescire paratus.

Tune bona incolumis minuas ?—Et Bestius urget
Doctores Graios. *Ita fit ; postquam sapere urbi*

in this, and a preceding passage, p. 37, see Juvenal, Sat. xiv. v. 413.

VER. 77. *Here Bestius rails, &c.—*]

“ — Sed Bestius urget
Doctores Graios.”

The poet has shewn no great adroitness here : he suffers a third speaker to break in rudely upon the dialogue, when he might, with better effect, have put all that was about to be said into the mouth of his opponent. The passage, however, has turned out quite a *deodund* to the criticks, who have with inexpressible delight heaped mountains of learned lumber upon it, to the utter confusion of themselves and their readers.

The words of Bestius are :—

Ita fit, postquam sapere urbi, &c.

which, if we would take Lorenzo's advice to young Master Gobbo, and *understand a plain man in his plain meaning*, might be rendered ; Thus 'tis !—since this emasculate wisdom of ours came to Rome with dates and spices, our very hay-makers have become luxurious, and learnt to vitiate their homely pottage with “ gross unguents.” But how, say the criticks, can *hoc nostrum* be made to agree with *venit cum pipere et palmis* ? if it was *our own*, it could not come from Greece. It needs no very intimate acquaintance with the language to discover, that *hoc nostrum sapere* is contemptuously used by the angry Bestius for, *this our modish philosophy*.—i. e. not of the growth of this country, but adopted, and made our own with other pernicious exoticks.

Sir W. Drummond thus understands the passage. “ So it is, that since the Grecian philosophers have come among us, this our taste, not versant in foreign flavours—afterwards came to the city with pepper and dates—the hay-cutters have vitiated

May slight my obsequies ; and, in return,
 Give my cold ashes to a scentless urn ;
 Reckless, what vapid drugs are flung thereon,
 Adulterate cassia, or dead cinnamon !—
 Can I (bethink in time) my means impair,
 And, with impunity, provoke my heir ?
 —Here Bestius rails—“ A plague on Greece,” he
 cries,
 “ And all her pedants !—there the evil lies ;

their puddings with thick oil.” The poet (he continues) speaks figuratively, and borrows his metaphors from the taste” It is not, however, the poet who speaks, but Bestius, an illiterate rustick, who seems not to delight much in rhetorick, and whose language is as gross as his understanding.

The criticks create their own “ difficulties,” as they call them ; if they could also overcome them as the great Thumb did the giants that he made, it would be well : but this is by no means the case. It is, indeed, settled, after a fierce conflict, that the *maris experts* of our poet is taken from the *maris experts* of Horace, and is used in the same sense : but on turning to the latter, the contest is renewed with greater fury than before, and no two of them can agree as to what that *sense* is.

Holyday (who bears no part in this unprofitable warfare,) thus gives the passage :

“ Thus ’tis, since your fond liberalitie,
 Rather emasculate soft luxurie, &c.”

and he subjoins the following judicious note to *emasculate*. “ Thus, with the most accurate interpreters, I render *maris experts*, taking *maris* for the genitive case of *mas*, not of *mare* ; for then there were a manifest contradiction in the sense, because presently after, he says, it came from Greece, and so ¹ consequence over the sea.”

Cum pipere, et palmis venit nostrum hoc maris ex-
pers,

Fœniseæ crasso vitiarunt unguine pultes !

Hæc cinere ulterior metuas ! At tu, meus heres

Quisquis eris, paulum à turba seductior audi.

O bone ! num ignoras ?—missa est à Cæsare lau-
rus

Insignem ob cladem Germanæ pubis, et aris

Frigidus excutitur cinis : ac jam postibus arma,

Jam chlamydes regum, jam lutea gausapa captis,

Essedaque, ingentesque locat Cæsonia Rhenos.

Dîs igitur, Genioque ducis centum paria, ob res

It only remains to observe, that Bestius is dismissed without ceremony : the poet deigns not to notice his impertinent interruption ; but, after hastily concluding the speech which had been broken off, drops the subject, and turns to a new speaker.

VER. 88. (*So, from the camp, his laurell'd missives say,]* It has been already observed, that the letters which announced a victory to the Senate and Roman people, were decorated with laurel. See Juvenal, Sat. iv.

VER. 91. *Lo ! from the imperial spoils, Cæsonia brings, &c.]* The same brilliant thought had struck Caligula himself. The following extract from Suetonius is worth notice, as tending to illustrate the passage before us. “ *Conversus hinc Caligula ad curam triumphi, præter captivos et transfugas barbaros, Galliarum quoque procerissimum quemque, et ut ipse dicebat, ἀξιόδξαμβειον, ac nonnullos ex principibus legit ac seposuit ad* ^{ἑσπέρην} *impam : coegitque non tantum rutilare, et submittere comam, et* ^{ἑσπέρην} *Germanicum addiscere,”* &c. Calig. 48. It appears from the same authority, that this deplorable maniaek was ex-

For since their mawkish, their enervate lore,
With dates and pepper, curs'd our luckless shore,
Luxury has tainted all; and ploughmen spoil,
Their wholesome barley-broth, with luscious oil."

Heavens! can you stretch (to fears like these a
slave)

Your fond solicitude beyond the grave?

Away!—

But thou, my heir, whoe'er thou art,
Step from the crowd, and let us talk apart.
Hear'st thou the news? Cæsar has won the day,
(So, from the camp, his laurell'd missives say,)
And Germany is ours! The city wakes,
And from her altars the cold ashes shakes.—
Lo! from the imperial spoils, Cæsonia brings,
Arms, and the martial robes of conquer'd kings,
To deck the temples; while, on either hand,
Chariots of war, and bulky captives stand,
In long array.—I, too, my joy to prove,
Will to the emperor's Genius, and to Jove,

tremely anxious to render his publick entrance as splendid as possible (*quantus nunquam alius fuisset*: *ibid.*) Cæsonia, therefore, in thus labouring to swell his triumph, was taking the surest means (not excepting even the famous love-potion) to secure his attachment, and govern in his name.

Persius was about seven years old when this triumph, or rather ovation (for it was a poor thing, after all), took place; it might therefore have dwelt upon his memory; especially as the

Egregie gestas, induco. Quis vetat ? aude !

Væ, nisi connives !—Oleum, artocreasque popello
Largior : an prohibes ? dic clare. “ Non adeo,
(inquis,)

Exossatus ager.”—Juxta est. Age, si mihi nulla

times in which he lived were not very fertile in raree-shows of this kind : a circumstance which might, perhaps, be in his contemplation, as there appears something of a sarcastick turn in the *frigidus cinis*.

VER. 98. ——— *an hundred pair, &c.*] The poet grows quite magnificent in his gratitude. Such a show of Gladiators would have strained even the imperial treasury ; but he is evidently playing upon the terrors of his avaricious heir.

VER. 105. “ *My means are not so low, &c.*] Holyday, surely manifested more wit than wisdom, when he observed that the difficulty in Juvenal was to choose a meaning, in Persius to find one : for a hundred different meanings have been found for the line before us :

————— “ An prohibes ? dic clare : non adeo, inquis,
“ Exossatus ager juxta est. Age,” &c.

“ These, (says the pseudo-Cornutus) are the words of the heir ; and amount to this : I dare not attempt to hinder you from doing what you please with your property, since there is a field not far from us full of stones, with which you may knock my brains out !” This interpretation bears the bell, I think ; though that of Ascensius must be allowed to come very near it : “ *Si clare dixero, ita ut turba audiat me negare victimam Cæsari, statim lapidibus qui jacent parati me obruat !*”—But enough, and more than enough, of such hopeless imbecility.

Burton tells us that *exossatus ager* means “ an estate clear of all *liens* upon it :” this is very well for a lawyer, like Burton, while Sheridan (which is very ill for a schoolmaster) affirms that it means “ land well cultivated.” It means, however, exhaust-

Devote, in gratitude for deeds so rare,
 Of Gladiators, mark ! an hundred pair.
 Who blames—who ventures to control me ? You ?
 Woe to your future prospects, if you do !
 —And, sir, not this alone ; for I have vow'd
 A supplemental largess, to the crowd,
 Of corn and oil. What ! muttering still ? Draw
 near,
 And speak aloud, for once, that I may hear.
 “ My means are not so low, that I should care
 For that poor pittance, you may leave your heir.”

ed, worn out, and (whatever lexicographers, and commentators may urge to the contrary) can by no possibility bear any other meaning.

Sir W. Drummond rejects this sense of the word, which he found in Madan, and thus “ interprets the passage.” ‘ Do you object to this expense ? asks the rich man. *Dic clare. Non adeo, inquis* : not so truly, say you : but you add, *exossatus ager juxta est* : a rich field is hard by :—“ insinuating, that the money would be more wisely laid out in the purchase of an estate.” This appears to me far more ingenious than “ satisfactory.”

Brewster, who appears to have misled Sir W. Drummond, renders it thus :

“ To this object you ? Come, speak out, be free.
 Object ! no sure, sir, it becomes not me.
 Extremely civil this ! good reason why ;
 How fair those fields ! how tempting do they lie !”
 And an anonymous translator, still more strangely.

———— “ Are you averse ?

Not I indeed, you answer ; still I see
 Your fertile fields which may descend to me.”

Jam reliqua ex amitis, patruelis nulla ; proneptis
 Nulla manet patrui, sterilis matertera vixit,
 Deque avia nihilum superest ; accedo Bovillas,
 Clivumque ad Virbî : præsto est mihi Manius
 heres.

“ Progenies terræ !” Quære ex me, quis mihi
 quartus

Sit pater ; haud prompte,—dicam tamen : adde
 etiam unum,

Unum etiam ; terræ est jam filius ; et mihi ritu
 Manius hic generis prope major avunculus exit.

Qui prior es, cur me in decursu lampada poscas ?

As civil as an orange, count ! It escapes the translators, that the warm retort of Persius depends upon the ~~prior~~ slight, or rejection of his offer by the supposed heir. *No sure, sir*—and *Not I indeed*, (words of humble deprecation) could never have called forth, *Age, si mihi nulla*, &c. But why should we thus persist in seeking knots in a bulrush ?—I would read,

————— “ Non adeo, inquis,

“ Exossatus ager.”—Juxta est. Age,

i. e. “ You will say, perhaps, that your own property is not so far reduced”—Here Persius, a little pettishly, it must be confessed, (since he has evidently laboured to alarm his heir), interrupts the supposed speaker, and cuts short his conclusion. Just as you please, for that ; I want to hear no further.

There is yet another explanation. Marcilius takes *adeo* for a verb, (instead of an adverb,) and understands it in the forensic sense, of entering on an heritage, (*adeo hæreditatem*). This deserves consideration. If we should say, however, “ Your land is not so rich, that I should care,” &c. instead of the line in the text ; it would not affect the meaning here given to the rest of

Just as you please : but were I, sir, bereft
 Of all my kin ; no aunt, no uncle left ;
 No nephew, niece ; were all my cousins gone,
 And all my cousins' cousins, every one,
 Aricia soon some Manius would supply,
 Well pleased to take that " pittance," when I die.

" Manius ! a beggar of the first degree,
 A son of earth, your heir !" Nay, question me,
 Ask who my grandsire's sire ? I know not well,—
 And yet, on recollection, I might tell ;
 But urge me one step further—I am mute :
 A son of earth, like Manius, past dispute.
 Thus, his descent and mine are equal prov'd,
 And we at last are cousins, though remov'd.

But why should you, who still before me run,
 Require my torch, ere yet the race be won ?

this disputed passage. " I renounce your estate ; it is exhausted." As you please. It is just the same to me.

VER. 111. *Aricia soon some Manius would supply,*]

—— " Accedo Bovillas

" Clivumque ad Virbī—præsto est mihi Manius."

These places lay in the Appian Way, on the road to Aricia, the favourite resort of beggars, (see Juvenal, Sat. iv.) on account of the facility which the rugged ascent afforded them of following the traveller's wheels, who could not readily escape from their clamorous importunity. Manius stands here as the representative or head of this worshipful fraternity ; but I know not on what account he was advanced to this supremacy in wretchedness.

Sum tibi Mercurius; venio deus huc ego, ut ille
Pingitur. An renuis? vin' tu gaudere relictis?

VER. 121. *But why should you, who still before me run,]*

“ Qui prior es, cur me in decursu lampada poscas?

This is almost the only line in these Satires in which I have found much real difficulty, and this, not from any inherent obscurity in the words, (for none can be plainer,) but from ignorance of the precise nature of the game to which they allude. Had it been the fortune of our author, to find an annotator among his contemporaries, this uncertainty would have been removed; but Cornutus, the nearest to his own age who has reached us, (to say nothing of his want of curiosity,) is a very indifferent scholiast, and his explanations, generally speaking, either explain nothing, or leave the meaning more obscure than they found it. I will, however, give the reader what he says. “ *Apud Athēnas ludi celeberrantur, in quibus cursu juvenes certabant; et qui victor primus erat, facem tollebat; deinde sequenti se tradebat, et secundus tertio, similiter omnes faciebant, et sibi invicem tradebant, donec currentium numerus compleretur;*” which to me is altogether unintelligible.

None of the commentators or translators notice any difficulty in this place. They give, in succession, what they are pleased to term a description of a torch-race, without appearing to suspect that it bears, in no one instance, the least analogy to that in the text. Holyday (whom Dryden has closely copied, both text and note) briefly observes that “ this is an allusion to the race celebrated in honour of Prometheus, when the first, running with a torch in his hand, when he was wearied, gave it to the next after him.” Madan (for the intermediate translators have nothing more to the purpose) observes that it is “ an allusion to a festival instituted in honour of Vulcan, where young men ran with lighted torches, and strove each who could first arrive at the goal without extinguishing his own. If the foremost tired as he was running, he gave up the race, and delivered his torch to the second; the second, if he tired, delivered

Think me your Mercury: Lo! here I stand,
 As pictures represent him, purse in hand.
 Will you, or not, the proffer'd boon receive,
 And take, with thankfulness, whate'er I leave?

it to the third, and so on till the race was over. The victory was his who carried the torch lighted to the end of the race."

Our criticks would make a poor figure at Newmarket; and would not have made a much better one, it may be thought, at Athens, where the frequenters of the Ceramicus were sufficiently *knowing* in the science of *give-and-take*.—If the second in the race had encumbered himself with the torch of the first who was beat, he would have run at a fearful disadvantage. The truth is, that there was a great variety of torch races among the Greeks; and it has, I believe, unfortunately happened, that the particular one to which Persius alludes, has escaped the notice of the ancient writers, or their description of it has not reached us; unless, perhaps, (which I am somewhat inclined to believe,) it be shadowed out in this passage. *Non enim quemadmodum in palæstra, qui tædas candentes accipit celebrior est in cursu continuo, quam ille qui tradit, ita melior Imperator novus qui accipit exercitum, quam ille qui decedit, propterea quod defatigatus cursor integro facem, hic peritus Imperator imperito exercitum tradit.*

In this state of uncertainty, all that can be affirmed with safety is, that he who gave up his torch, resigned the chance of winning.—The allusion is probably personal, and relates to the poet's own feelings; in this light, it is not without interest: he seems to say to his heir, (who, from his indifference was, perhaps, remotely allied,) you are in full health; and have every prospect of outstripping me in the career of life; do not, then, prematurely take from me the chance of extending my days a little—do not call for my torch before I have given up the race, and snatch (in the beautiful language of Shakspeare) *at half an hour of my frail life*.

“Deest aliquid summæ.” Minui mihi; sed tibi
 totum est,
 Quicquid id est. Ubi sit, fuge quærere, quod mihi
 quondam
 Legârat Tadius: neu dicta repone paterna;
Fœnoris accedat merces; hinc exime sumptus.
 “Quid reliquum est?” Reliquum! nunc, nunc
 impensius unge,
 Unge, puer, caules! Mihi festa luce coquatur
 Urtica, et fissa fumosum sinciput aure,
 Ut tuus iste nepos olim, satur anseris extis,
 Cum morosa vago singultiet inguine vena,
 Patriciæ immeiat vulvæ? mihi trama figuræ
 Sit reliqua; ast illi tremat omento popa venter?

“Ah! think, my friend, while you impatient wait,
 And grieve that my last hour should come so late,
 Think, after you in life’s career I ran,
 And last should finish what I last began.”

Such appears to be the purport of our author’s pathetick expostulation; which conveys the conviction of his own mind, that the fatal termination of the contest was inevitable, and, not very remote.

The commentators, from Casaubon downwards, maintain that *Qui prior es* is not referable to *decursu*, but to the heir; because, say they, “it would otherwise be *contrary* to the ceremony.” But this, whatever be the “ceremony,” as it is termed, is precisely what the poet says; and upon this contrariety alone, the severity of the reproof depends.

VER. 123. *Think me your Mercury, &c.*] i. e. Look not on my estate as necessarily devolving upon you, but rather regard me

Something, you murmur, of the heap is spent.
 True: as occasion call'd, it freely went;
 In life 'twas mine: but death your chance secures,
 And what remains, or more, or less, is yours.
 Of Tadius' legacy no questions raise,
 Nor turn upon me with a grandsire phrase,
 "Live on the interest of your fortune, boy;
 To touch the principal, is to destroy."

"What, after all, may I expect to have?"
Expect!—Pour oil upon my viands, slave,
 Pour with unsparing hand! shall my best cheer,
 On high and solemn days, be the singed ear
 Of sometough, smoke-dried hog, with nettles drest;
 That your descendant, while in earth I rest,
 May gorge on dainties, and, when lust excites,
 Give, to patrician beds, his wasteful nights?

Shall I, a napless figure, pale and thin,
 Glide by, transparent, in a parchment skin,
 That he may strut with more than priestly pride,
 And swag his portly paunch from side to side?—

as the god of gain, as the Mercury of poets and painters, holding out to you unlooked for and fortuitous advantages: alluding probably to his declining health, which afforded an unexpected chance to the heir; who was evidently his senior.

VER. 137. *Shall my best cheer, &c.*] My pleasant friend of the Little Ambrey, has outdone himself in this place. *Mihi festa luce coquatur Urtica, &c.* he renders "Must I feed on nettle broth that that nephew of yours may hereafter be filled with

Vende animam lucro; mercare, atque excute
solers

Omne latus mundi; ne sit præstantior alter
Cappadocas rigida pingues plausisse catasta.
Rem duplica. Feci: jam triplex, jam mihi quarto,
Jam decies redit in rugam. Depunge, ubi sistam,
Inventus, Chrysippe, tui finitor acervi!

goose-giblets, when your ambitious cousin, longing to embrace the patrician dame, sighs after the castle of comfort?"

The *trama* of the next line is well explained by M. Raoul. "*Metaphore hardie, et toutefois parfaitement exacte, La trame est la fil que la navette entrelace à diverses reprises dans la chaîne; c'est la premier tissu de la toile. Lorsque la toile est usée, la trame paroît.*" There is an allusion to this circumstance in a fragment of Euripides; preserved by Athenæus, b. 10. c. 2.

Λαμπροὶ δ' ἐν ἡβῇ, καὶ πολέως ἀγαλμαῖα,
Φοιτῶσ' ὅταν δὲ προσπέσῃ γῆρος πικρὸν,
Τριβῶνες ἐκλείποντες οἰχονῶναι κροκάς.

VER. 150. None bring his slaves, &c.]

————— "Ne sit præstantior alter

"Cappadocas rigida pingues plausisse catasta."

The Roman slave-market was principally furnished from Cappadocia, the inhabitants of which seem to have *agnised a natural and prompt alacrity* in servitude: if they have not been much injured by those who knew them well, they were fitted for it, by the most degrading vices. See Juv. Sat. vii. The *catasta* was a kind of moveable machine, in which the slaves were ranged on different platforms, according to their age or stature. It is mentioned by Martial, from whom it would appear to have been appropriated to the more select and valuable ones.

"Inspexit molles pueros, oculisque comedit

"Non hos quos primæ prostituere casæ,

Go, truck your soul or gain! buy, sell, exchange;

From pole to pole in quest of profit range.

Let none more shrewdly play the factor's part;

None bring his slaves more timely to the mart;

Puff them with happier skill, as caged they stand,

Or clap their well-fed sides with nicer hand.

Double your fortune—treble it—yet more—

'Tis four, six, ten-fold what it was before:

O bound the heap—You, who could yours confine,

Tell me, Chrysippus, how to limit mine!

“ Sed quos arcanæ servant tabulata catastæ,

“ Et quos non populus, nec mea turba videt.”

Lib. ix. epig. 60.

This is said of Mamurra; and the reader may be confident from what is related of this most amusing boaster, (Juv. Sat. vii.) that he would not condescend to look at common ware. From the *rigida* of Persius, and the *arcana* of Martial, it may be surmised that the *catasta* was secured by some kind of fence, or lattice-work.

VER. 155. *O bound the heap—Chrysippus, &c.*] The conclusion of this Satire, like that of the last, appears abrupt, and hurried, but it may be observed, at the same time, that Persius had previously enlarged on the subject of avarice, and therefore had the less need to dwell on it here. Chrysippus, on whom he calls for assistance, was, like Cleanthes, a disciple of Zeno, and celebrated above them both, for the subtlety of his dialecticks; which, say the old grammarians, the gods, if they had ever been disposed to talk logically, would have adopted for their own.*

Perhaps however they took the hint, and transported the

The gods are infinitely obliged to this favourable opinion of their judgment.—But Chrysippus is best known to us as the inventor of that notable species of argument the Sorites, (*Σωρος*) or Heap, which is made up of an indefinite number of propositions, the one rising out of the other, so that the progression is infinite, unless a conclusion is formed by adroitly connecting the predicate with the first subject. Cicero, who has more than one reference to it in his *Academicks*, calls it, “*Captiosum genus interrogationis quod minimè in Philosophia probari solet, cum aliquod minutatim et gradatim additur aut demitur.*” This he illustrates, elsewhere, by the well-known instance.—What precise number of grains constitute a heap? Do three? four? five? &c. Again: At what precise point does a heap cease to be so? When one?—two?—three? four, &c. grains are taken from it? Enough of this idle sophism—it is more than time to follow the example of Holyday. “Wherefore, not to trouble the reader further with these roundabouts, I come to the poet:

“And now, where likewise I may rest, design,
“Chrysippus, thou that didst thy heap confine.”

“THE END OF PERSIUS.*”

whole System to Olympus; for of the seven hundred and fifty books which this doctor subtilissimus is said to have excogitated, not one has been seen on earth for many ages.

* Holyday has yet a few last words; and those who are acquainted with the real character of his version of Juvenal, which he was now meditating, will smile at the energy with which he threatens to wind up each *corporal faculty* to that great work:

“This lash has but SIXTEEN knots: but see thou mend;
“Or peradventure else, I shall intend
“To come *in fury*; and thee naked strip,
“And scourge thee with a SIXTEEN knotted whip.”

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ERRATA.

P. 46. note, l. 8, *for* poignat, *read* poignant.

1. 7, *dele* comma after much

53. l. 2, *for* Callirhoen, *read* Callirhoen.

69. l. 10, *for* fear, *read* fear :

172. note, l. 8, *for* tout, *read* toute.

173. l. 5, *for* madman? *read* madman!

